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As much as any event since the communist collapse, the vote on NAFTA could define America's post-cold war identity. The nation's long-run economic health, its geopolitical reach, even its moral character, are very much at stake here. The defeat of NAFTA would be the first step in precisely the wrong direction – an America looking inward rather than outward, governed by fear rather than reason – and could make turning back difficult. — *THE EDITORS,* CONTINUED, PAGE 7.

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

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OCTOBER 11, 1993

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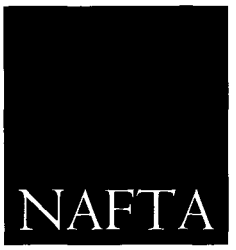

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CORRESPONDENCE

States of desire

To the editors:

Martin Peretz's article "From Sarajevo to Jerusalem" (September 6) espouses several disturbing ideas regarding state formation. He writes that "it is important to note also that this is a world in which not every ethnic group's ambitions for sovereignty can be met, as most *sensible observers* seem to realize (my emphasis)." Disregarding his arrogant presumption that those who are currently fighting for their sovereignty (versus those who fought forty-five or 215 years ago) are nothing but disillusioned radicals, he seems to be saying, "sorry, we are all out of land, you'll just have to remain stateless." It is both easy and dangerous for countries whose sovereignty is well established and who furthermore have substantial control over the processes of nation-building in young countries to decide that the time for declaring independence is over. Furthermore, the Kurds, for one, are not peaceably enjoying their subjugation under Saddam Hussein or their lack of adequate representation in Turkey and Iran. During the 1991 Gulf war, and earlier in the 1970s, the Kurdish faction in Iraq assembled a not insignificant opposition group. The self-serving message conveyed to the Catholics of Northern Ireland, the Tibetans and the Kashmiris is: "Others have lived under a regime which refuses to recognize their autonomy; so can you." With Peretz's philosophy as the basis for a new cold war foreign policy, we would probably never see another new republic.

AARON DEAN
Arlington, Virginia

To the editors:

There is a factual slip in Martin Peretz's article. In making the point that while the United States follows the security policies of President Clinton, the enforcement of any Arab-Israeli peace agreement should depend on Israeli military power rather than an American guarantee, Peretz remarks that "already in 1967, when Egypt closed the Straits of Tiran to the Gulf of Aqaba, Lyndon Johnson failed to produce on a U.S. commitment to keep the seas open to Israeli shipping (of the naval powers, only little Holland was willing to run Nasser's blockade)."

Several nations were preparing to convoy Israeli shipping through the Gulf of Aqaba when the Six-Day War exploded on June 5, 1967—Great Britain, Canada, Iran and Australia, as well as the Netherlands. Great Britain had proposed the plan, and pressed hard for quick action to carry it out. The United States was assembling naval vessels at both ends of the canal, and had sent an aircraft carrier through the canal as a warning. It was a bleak moment in the Vietnam War, and some urged Johnson to get an additional congressional resolution before sending a convoy through. When Secretaries Rusk and McNamara took soundings in Congress, they ran into the strong opinion that we should "leave the job to the Israelis." President Eisenhower assured Johnson that his commitment to keep the Straits open was "a debt of honor for the United States," and that he would publicly support any action Johnson decided to take.

Some years after the event, Golda Meir said that she would "go to her grave convinced that Johnson would have acted to open the Straits if the Six-Day War had not broken out when it did." I was and am of the same view.

EUGENE V. ROSTOW
Distinguished Research Professor
National Defense University
Washington, DC

License to kill

To the editors:

Judging by his comments in the Cape Cod Diarist ("Boom," August 2), it appears that Martin Peretz has yet to read *A License to Kill: Israeli Operations against "Wanted" and Masked Palestinians*, Middle East Watch's new report on Israel's undercover units.

Twelve months of full-time work by a talented Israeli field researcher, augmented by the work of senior staff who visited from New York, went into compiling this 187-page report. Some of the most damning information came from inside the Israeli army—not from those Palestinians, whom Peretz sneeringly dismisses as "knowing how to preen before Western human rights activists" and who, he claims, do not place "a big premium on telling the truth."

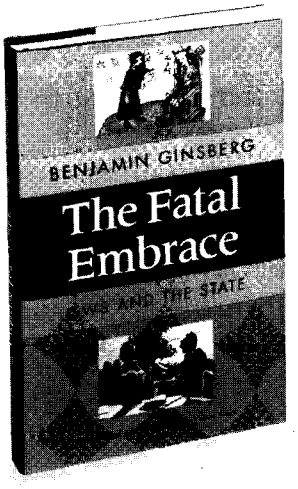
Our conclusions are carefully drawn. They state that undercover units of the Israeli security forces routinely use excessive force against Palestinian targets, in many cases amounting to a policy of shoot-to-kill. Rarely is there any accountability. When prosecutions of soldiers for particularly blatant abuses have taken place, those convicted have received derisively light sentences.

For Peretz, apparently, all of this is justified on the grounds that "Palestinians who are captured in the war they are

Can it happen here?

THE FATAL EMBRACE
Jews and the State

Benjamin Ginsberg



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fighting against Israel cannot be expected to be treated as if they were white-collar criminals." If he intends to imply by this that Israel has carte blanche to kill or abuse Palestinian suspects in the occupied territories, he is as ignorant of Israeli law as he is of our report. Israel's official position is that in the occupied territories it is conducting police action to apprehend and try wanted persons rather than engaging in Rambo-style combat operations. In *A License to Kill,* Middle East Watch holds Israel not only to international standards but also to the standards it has set for itself.

GARY SICK
ANDREW WHITLEY
Middle East Watch
New York, New York

Nanny-killer

To the editors:

In "Notebook" (September 6), a reference is made to a tragic event that took place in the home of the parents of current president Carlos Salinas de Gortari, when he was only 3 years of age, in 1951. In this regrettable incident, an 8-year-old friend of the Salinas children was responsible for the accidental death of the maid. The proper authorities carried out an investigation that proved this to be the case, and concluded that it had been an accident. The name of the youngster was withheld by the authorities. This is a common practice, in Mexico and in many other countries, when a minor is involved.

At the time, the father of Carlos Salinas held a modest position in the federal bureaucracy. In 1987 an attempt was made at exploiting this incident, at a time when Carlos Salinas was mentioned as a possible presidential candidate. This matter was disregarded by public opinion and the media, given its evident lack of seriousness as well as the bad faith and baseness of those who tried to take advantage of it.

It is regrettable that, years later, a prestigious publication such as THE NEW REPUBLIC should bring up these old allegations that attempt to discredit public figures, confuse public opinions and draw attention away from the important issues on which responsible journalism should be focusing.

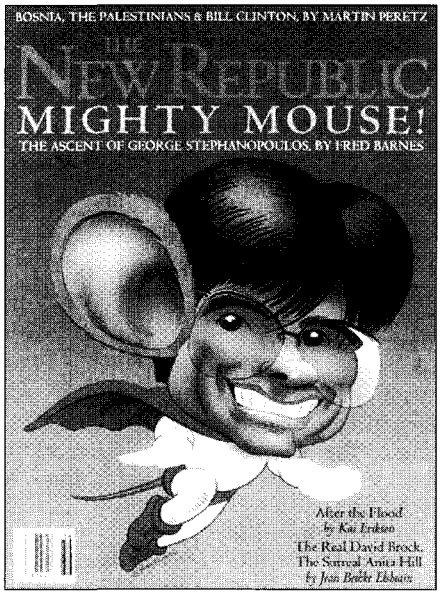
VICTOR AVILES
Minister for Press and Public Affairs,
Embassy of Mexico

Pigmentary restraint

To the editors:

In her review of *The Real Anita Hill,* ("Trial by Fury," September 6), Jean Bethke Elshtain criticizes a political cartoon in which Clarence Thomas's face is "devoid of shading." Elshtain states, "If Thomas were represented as a black man, the cartoonist might be taken for a racist ... [so the cartoonist found it] better to bleach Thomas." But Clarence Thomas is not literally black, any more than the other figures in the cartoon, Justices O'Connor and Ginsberg, are literally white.

Speaking as a sometime political cartoonist, I can attest to the difficulty of depicting differences in race using a medium—pen and india ink—that is not ideally suited for rendering subtle gradations of tone. If the cartoonist is even slightly heavy-handed in delineating black skin, the cartoon can indeed seem racist. If the cartoonist tries to avoid this


BOSNIA, THE PALESTINIANS & BILL CLINTON, BY MARTIN PERETZ
THE NEW REPUBLIC
MIGHTY MOUSE!
THE ASCENT OF GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS, BY FRED BARNES
After the Flood
by Kai Erikson
The Real David Brock,
The Surreal Anita Hill
by Jean Bethke Elshtain

by downplaying skin color—implying that race is more than a matter of skin color—I find it praiseworthy. It's silly for Elshtain to call this "bleaching."

Political cartoons are small; there isn't much room for visual subtleties. Given this, I favor the cartoonist who errs on the side of pigmentary restraint over the cartoonist whose idea of a black caricature resembles a member of a minstrel show.

DAVID ENGLISH
Somerville, Massachusetts

Women in Russia

To the editors:

Liesl Schillinger's "Devushki!" (Moscow Postcard, August 9) seems to have become the subject of an ongoing dialogue, so, being of Russian background and having made several trips to Russia during the last three years, I thought I'd add my own observations. First, *devushka* does not mean "girl" in the sense of "girl child" (the word for that is *devochka*), but rather "young woman." Second, there is simply no polite way to address people in Russia today, since "citizen" and "comrade" have long been obsolete (except in official parlance) and there are no equivalents of "sir" or "madam." Just as women go from *devushka* to *babushka* (granny), men go from *molodoy chelovek* (young man) to *dedushka* (grandpa). *Muzhchina* and *zhenshchina* ("man" and "woman") are relatively recent forms of address, considered exceedingly vulgar by the educated. This is not because Russian women prefer to be called girls rather than women; to use *zhenshchina* when speaking of someone in the third person is entirely normal. Why is it offensive as a form of address? Some have speculated that addressing people as "man" and "woman" wipes out all the cultural layers of personality, stripping them down to the bare fact of biological sex. (One Russian journalist remarked that to him, it suggested prostitutes and johns addressing each other.)

Let me also state for the record that during my fairly lengthy stays in Moscow, I have never been molested on the metro or in the street, nor have I seen any other woman subjected to such treatment. (I should note that I do not regard pick-up lines as molestation.) While Russian women may consider compliments from strangers, attempted pick-ups and displays of chivalry flattering, and are often baffled by the tendency of Western women to be offended by such behavior, I seriously doubt that many Russian women would be pleased to have their buttocks grabbed on the metro. (When I told my Russian women friends about a pick-up episode that *I* found quite amusing—my would-be suitor kept saying that I couldn't go back to America without "trying a good Russian man"—most of them were horrified.)

One final note. Russian women today certainly face a multitude of problems, many of them stemming from sexism. Gender stereotyping in the media is common; when a successful professional woman is profiled, she is often complimented on her "masculine mind" or asked how she can "remain feminine" in a job that requires so much assertiveness and ambition. Most newspaper ads for good, high-paying jobs specify "men wanted" or "men preferred." If anyone needs feminism, it's Russian women. But as long as all they are offered is that contemporary brand of American feminism that sees all male sexual interest as a form of violation, feminism in Russia has no chance.

CATHY YOUNG
Middletown, New Jersey

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FROM WASHINGTON

Arafat and Hitler

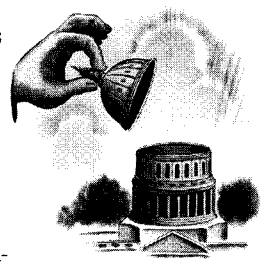
Up until August 22, 1939, the American Communist Party was agitating urgently for U.S. rearmament to prepare for the war against European Fascism. Then came the Hitler-Stalin pact. Within days the struggle in Europe became "an imperialist war in which the rulers of both sides are equally guilty." At Madison Square Garden on September 11 (records Maurice Isserman in his book, *Which Side Were You On: The American Communist Party During the Second World War*), 20,000 Communists rallied against American involvement in the European war. That was the C.P.'s line until exactly June 22, 1941, when Hitler invaded Russia. Within days the C.P. was agitating once again for the "defeat of Hitler and Hitlerism."

This is a legendary example of intellectual, er, flexibility. No doubt unfairly, I can't help being reminded of it by the equally dramatic flip-flop performed by many American supporters of Israel—including members of Congress—on the subject of Yasir Arafat and the Palestine Liberation Organization. One day he and it are incorrigible terrorists with whom the United States should never, ever deal. The next day it's bear hugs and autographs in the corridors of the Capitol.

Yes, of course, there are all sorts of ways in which the analogy does not hold. Above all, Israel is an embattled democracy and an ally of the United States; Stalin's Soviet Union was none of those things. Nevertheless, it is undeniably true that the sudden change of heart about Arafat in America was occasioned more by a sudden change of heart by the government of Israel than by the much more gradual change of heart by Arafat himself—which, if it is genuine, has been going on in public for several years. After all, a premise of the previous attitude was that any apparent change of heart by Arafat could not possibly be genuine. "Any comments [by Arafat] renouncing terrorism are tactical only," explained Senator Arlen Specter in 1990.

Still on the law books in the United States are what *CQ Weekly* describes as "a thick file of statutory condemnations and prohibitions" of the PLO, such as the Anti-Terrorism Act of 1987, which declares: "Congress determines that the PLO and its affiliates are a terrorist organization and a threat to the interests of the United States." These will now be repealed. But can there be any doubt that if the Likud party had won the last Israeli election instead of Labor, and if the Israeli government was still pledged never to trade land for peace or deal with the PLO, senators would be climbing all over each other to renew those condemnations and prohibitions?

AIPAC, the Israel lobby, greeted news of the Rabin-Arafat Pact—which caught it, like everyone else in America, by surprise—with the statement: "We warmly welcome the historic decision of the PLO to renounce terror and confrontation with Israel and take the path of coexistence." But the PLO had claimed to renounce terror and accept Israel for a while. The "historic decision" was Israel's to believe it.



Two contradictory lessons can be drawn from this exercise in historical analogy. One is for those who believe that Israel and its most adamant U.S. supporters were right the first time: that the PLO was, is and always will be a terrorist organization bent on the destruction of the Jewish state. For them, the analogy to the Hitler-Stalin pact is simply that Arafat, like Hitler, is not to be trusted, and that this deal with the devil will backfire.

An opposite lesson is for those of no special sympathy for the state of Israel, who believe the American ban on dealings with the PLO was absurd all along. For them, the analogy to the Hitler-Stalin pact is that both episodes illustrate the error of letting your opinions be held in thrall by a foreign power. Your mind is not your own if someone several thousand miles away can flip it like a switch.

For myself, I draw neither of these conclusions, exactly. I have no special problem deferring to the Israeli government's judgment about when the potential advantages of legitimizing the PLO are worth the potential risks. I think that judgment safely could have been made years sooner, but the judgment was Israel's to make. What bothers me is that supporters of Israel—including myself—rarely if ever put the issue in those strategic terms. The anathema on Arafat was expressed as a moral absolute: he is a terrorist who must never be dealt with. Then suddenly, one day, he wasn't a terrorist anymore. That is embarrassing.

To their credit, there is a school of American Jewish commentators who have not fallen into this trap. They are conservatives who, during the Likud years when Israel was frustrating many outsiders with its intransigence, argued passionately that Jews outside Israel had no right to criticize the strategy of Israel's democratically elected government because Israelis' lives were on the line and theirs, the outsiders', were not. When Labor came in and Israel was suddenly more willing to deal than these outsiders thought wise, this argument came back to haunt them. But by-and-large these folks—such as William Safire—have been true to the rule they laid down for others. Their attitude toward the deal has been a sort of strained acquiescence, but one that doesn't pretend to be persuaded that Yasir Arafat has changed his spots. (This seems to be roughly TNR's attitude. The notorious exception to the pattern is the editor of *Commentary*, Norman Podhoretz, who has been thundering against Israeli government policy with an enthusiasm worthy of Noam Chomsky.)

There is nothing wrong with changing your mind. And the post-cold war world offers thoughtful people of all political stripes dramatic opportunities for flip-flops. Militarist hawks can turn into isolationists; near-pacifist doves can turn into aggressive interveners. Free trade, strategic defense, the United Nations are all up for grabs. But in this unfamiliar landscape, it is especially important to examine your premises regularly—doctors recommend at least once every six months—and make sure you're being straight with yourself.

Suppose you were a great enthusiast for the contra war in Nicaragua and the invasion of Grenada who now opposes American intervention in Bosnia. That can be explained (among other ways) by the death of communism. But were you perhaps being disingenuous—or self-deluded—in justifying your previous enthusiasms on the basis of humanitarian concern for the sufferings of foreigners? And shouldn't your view about whether the president needs congressional approval for military actions be independent of whether you yourself approve of such actions?

Similarly, if you used to be a dove and now find yourself making surprisingly hawkish noises, shouldn't you inventory your arguments, admitting that some old ones now seem erroneous and avoiding some new ones, however convenient to your present views?

Above all, shouldn't you be a bit suspicious of your own opinions if they change 180 degrees overnight?

MICHAEL KINSLEY

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

OCTOBER 11, 1993

FOR NAFTA

(*continued from the cover*)

Notwithstanding its ultimate import, notwithstanding the fury it has stirred, the North American Free Trade Agreement *per se* will have little effect on the U.S. economy. A very small number of jobs will be lost, maybe 150,000 over a decade; a probably larger number of (generally better paying) jobs will be gained; and consumers will benefit, though slightly, from lower prices; GDP will rise by a blip. Thus, if all Americans could foresee NAFTA's direct economic effects, and voted strictly on self-interest, a NAFTA referendum would win by one of the larger, but one of the more tepid, majorities in the history of electoral politics.

How has this simple message—that even by myopic utilitarian calculus, NAFTA makes (mild) sense for the nation—been so thoroughly obscured by wild visions of economic ruin? And why have people worked so hard to obscure it? Here lies the key to understanding why NAFTA matters so greatly in the longer and broader view.

Ross Perot, Pat Buchanan, Jesse Jackson and Ralph Nader (we like to imagine them as a heavy metal band) succeeded for a while in drowning out the central truth about NAFTA, but lately, finally, it has begun to sink in: NAFTA will tear down walls mostly around the Mexican, not the U.S., economy. Mexico's tariffs are on average two and half times America's—10 percent versus 4 percent—and on both sides they would gradually go to zero.

Curiously, this disparity is even greater in some industries where American union resistance has been so fierce. Take cars. The effective U.S. tariff on Mexican-made cars is now 2.2 percent. Its elimination will barely affect an auto executive deciding where to build a plant. Mexico's tariff on American-made cars is 20 percent. NAFTA would cut it in half overnight, and reduce it to zero over ten years. Of course, the number of Mexican new-car buyers is small (but growing, and NAFTA would hasten the growth). So whether American auto workers would, on balance, benefit is hard to say. But a number of economists, such as Gary Hufbauer of the Institute for International Economics, believe that United Auto Workers is disserving its members by opposing NAFTA. And surely the UAW is betraying distinct constituencies. Mexican tariffs on auto parts average 13 percent. American tariffs average *less than one-half of 1 percent.* Has the UAW explained this to workers in auto-parts plants?

Across the landscape lie similar cases, where an honest and representative labor union would be ambivalent about NAFTA. For example, though *apparel* workers will probably, on balance, suffer from NAFTA, *textile* workers—the yarn and fabric makers in the southeast—will probably, on balance, gain.

Yet the unions speak with one voice, and *loudly*; they're pulling out their rarely used big guns, threatening congressional deserters with execution. Even if you agree that more low-skill union jobs will be destroyed than created—and they almost surely will—this response is disproportionate; the net losses—a few thousand a year for a decade—are a drop in the bucket of overall layoffs, and are dwarfed by the fallout from other policies, such as Pentagon downsizing.

Lane Kirkland is not stupid, and he is not a hysteric. There is a broader agenda here: protectionism writ large. Union leaders accurately see in Mexico a tiny token of the sweeping trend that has hurt low-skill workers and will keep hurting them: the flood of low-wage foreign competition as technology, free trade and the triumph of capitalism make the labor market global. Defeating NAFTA would lay sturdy groundwork for real resistance to this trend. With Congress cowed, dooming any GATT pact would be almost trivially easy. The next step—raising tariffs against dozens of low-wage nations—would then be thinkable.

Broader protectionism is not just the political fallout of a NAFTA defeat; it is the logical consequence. If you buy the anti-NAFTA argument—that low tariffs, which hurt low-skill American workers, are bad—it follows that higher tariffs, which would protect those workers, are good. And raising tariffs very high very soon is the only way to insulate all workers from the new world.

Though Ross Perot has (with commendable candor) broached the issue of a new "social tariff" against Mexico, most NAFTA opponents keep quiet about the deeper meaning of their cause. Wisely so. Consumers may not care much about the few dollars a year NAFTA would save them. But try asking them about the thousand or more dollars per year it would take to give America's low-skill work force real protection. Honestly raising the protectionism issue would only crystallize the fact that consumers naturally favor free trade (contrary to the writ-

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ings of reporters who consider Ralph Nader a true proxy for the common man).

Protectionism's ultimate burdens go well beyond consumers. As sheltered industries fell further behind the foreign competition, the market for American products would shrink until it included only Americans. Hence the ugly combination of high prices *and* the eventual loss of jobs, whose former occupants would then be shocked to find their long-cossetted skills hopelessly archaic. More than that: tariffs against developing economies bring tariffs against us. And developing countries are the export markets of the future—indeed of the present; their purchase of American goods rose by almost one-third over the last two years, nearly offsetting slackened demand in Europe and Japan.

The message is so old that repeating it would be wearying if it weren't so true: protectionism in the long run is a horrible mistake, even for many of the people it at first protects. And the NAFTA vote is above all a referendum on protectionism in the long run.

For a moral nation, free trade entails care for the casualties of competition. In the short run this means aid and retraining of at least the magnitude envisioned by Labor Secretary Robert Reich. (Republicans, take note.) In the long run it means a true federal commitment to public education. It *may* eventually mean an immigration policy that limits competition for nonexportable service-sector jobs (in, say, restaurants). This final option is a last resort: it is a real sacrifice of liberal internationalist principle, and justified only as the lesser of evils if some such sacrifice is unavoidable.

That America's economic health depends heavily on the triumph at this juncture of free trade is about half of what makes the juncture crucial. Though linkage between protectionism and isolationism isn't a logical necessity, it is a fact. Abroad, a closed economy is seen as a poor credential for leadership. At home, protectionism and isolationism grow in the same soil; both thrive, if not on xenophobia, then at least on disregard for the welfare of foreign peoples.

The moral failing in such disregard is clear. Less obvious is the intellectual lapse. A central feature of recent history is the growing overlap between the interests of foreigners and of Americans. Prosperity here without prosperity abroad is even less imaginable now than it was before the information age so firmly tied national economies together. Lasting security at home without peace in Eurasia, the Pacific or the Middle East grows ever less plausible as nuclear materials spread and the technology of terrorism evolves. A clean environment without the cooperation of Mexico, and other nations, is now impossible. With each passing decade, the line between domestic and foreign policy becomes more blurry. (Which one is NAFTA?) So does the line between internationalism as moral vision and as national self-interest. What's good has become what's savvy.

How sadly perverse, then, that so many liberal internationalists are choosing this moment to jump ship. Kirkland and other American unionists have spent much time and sweat organizing workers around the world in the name of international brotherhood, and suddenly they deem Mexicans unworthy of concern. They don't admit this, of course. They insist that NAFTA will be bad for Mexican laborers. This isn't easy; after contending, against the bulk of theory and evidence, that NAFTA will massively send American jobs south of the border, it is a little awkward to start talking about how NAFTA will do more harm than good to Mexicans.

For sheer disingenuousness, this claim is matched only by the proposed cure: sharply and immediately raising Mexican wages. What American unionists really want, of course, are Mexican wages high enough to forestall any loss of American jobs. Such levels would do more than that: they would lead Mexican employers to make do with fewer workers—not what a nation with 20 percent unemployment most needs. For Mexicans, the one thing worse than being "exploited" is not being exploited.

The desire of some NAFTA opponents to supranationally dictate Mexican labor law is matched, on the part of others, by fear of the word "supranational." NAFTA, says Buchanan, is "an insider's deal among the transnational elites," it's "a ship that carries in its cargo the virus of globalism and the bacillus of statism." Yikes! Somebody better go fetch the antibiotics of protectionism, isolationism and bad writing! In truth, the supranational bodies set up by NAFTA side agreements are fairly well proportioned to their tasks. The intrinsically and immediately international problem of pollution warrants what it got: a trinational commission with real teeth. The less potent commission on labor standards, to be sure, could have used a bit more in the way of muscle and scope; but by and large, high wages and good working conditions can come enduringly to Mexicans only through plain old economic development, which will sustain progress toward democracy and set the stage for the liberal social policies that have always been the luxury of affluent nations. NAFTA, by prodding this development, will also help solve the immigration problem, contrary to Buchanan's other main kind of hysteria.

It is a sad coincidence that, just as history is so intertwining domestic and foreign interests, the sudden loss of America's favorite enemy—Reds—has made browns and yellows handy repositories for fear and antipathy. It may not be too great a flight of rhetoric to say that, at this crossroads of post-cold war history, Pat Buchanan and Ross Perot represent the cause of evil. (And they do it very well.) It is certainly not extravagant to say they represent the cause of malicious and momentous confusion. President Clinton alone is positioned to decisively make the case for clarity, and for good. He has finally begun the fight, and to great effect. He has shown again that without a script he can be as great a communicator as Ronald Reagan was with one. That puts him in a league with Perot—a rival who, for reasons of policy, politics and morality, must now be engaged head-on. •

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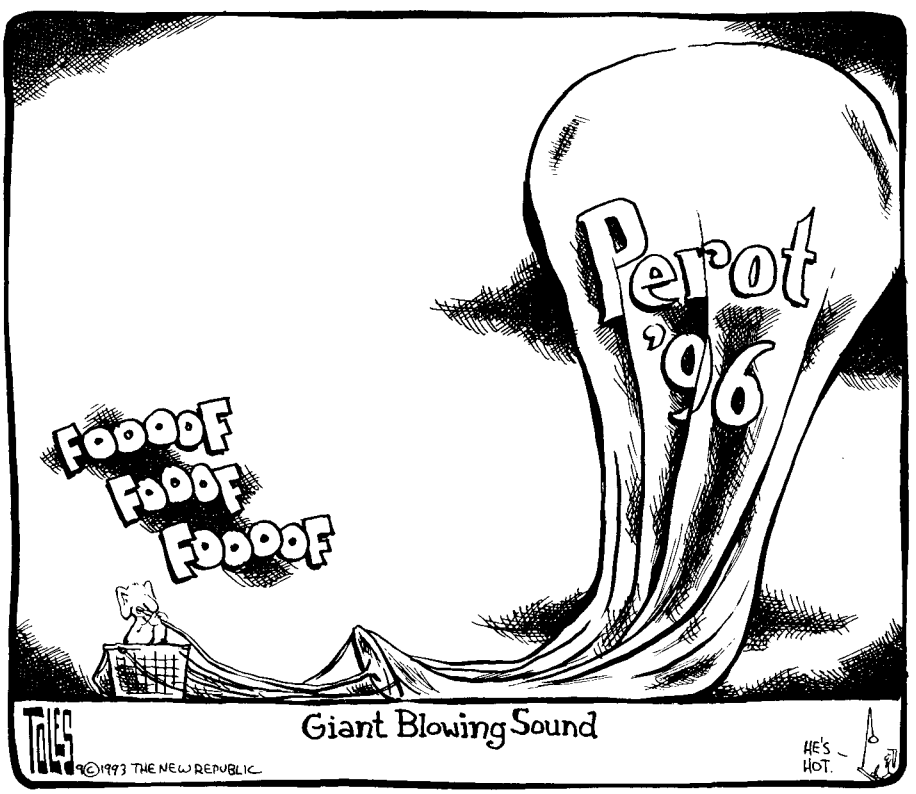
NOTEBOOK

STRAIGHT FROM DISNEYLAND: One week after Hyperion Press released *Save Your Job, Save Our Nation*, Ross Perot's anti-NAFTA diatribe, the Disney-owned publisher bought the American rights to the purported Jack the Ripper diary. Warner Books had dropped its plans to publish the manuscript when Kenneth Rendell, an expert in historical documents, deemed the diary a hoax. Hyperion publisher Robert Miller defended his decision by echoing Simon and Schuster's ad campaign for Joe McGinniss's *The Last Brother*. "We've seen the material and we don't know who to believe," Miller says. "We don't want to make our own decision about it." Make up your own mind. We're simply amused to see that Hyperion uses the same fact-checking regimen for Jack the Ripper as it does for Pat Choate.



ABSOLUT WASHINGTON: We note in a recent volume of the Federal Register (sent to us by a reader) that the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (the same people who brought us the Waco immolation) have developed a wonderfully neoliberal solution to the burning question of when vodka is no longer vodka. Now that the spirit is widely available in flavored varieties, the bureau has decided to redesignate the new substances as "'flavored vodka'... because citric acid is not an essential component of vodka." But how to tell when the new vodka is really new? That's where private-public sector cooperation comes in. "During the comment period, ATF secured an outside testing firm, Odor Science and Engineering (OS&E), to conduct independent testing on sensory threshold levels for citric acid addition to vodka." The taste panel was made up of "ten experienced sensory panelists," under a methodology known as "Standard Practice for Determination of Odor and Taste Thresholds By a Forced-Choice Ascending Concentration Series Method of Limits" (ASTM Procedure E-679). A great idea for reinvented government—come to think of it, even for national service for teenagers looking for a way to pay for college. Volunteers, anyone?

INEVITABLE MISTAKE: The University of Pennsylvania's press release explaining its decision to drop all charges against members of the Black Students Association who confiscated and destroyed the entire press run of the Penn student newspaper, the *Daily Pennsylvanian*, last April shows that the university hasn't managed to go beyond Hackneyesque blather. "Today we look forward, not backward," said interim president Claire Fagin. "The confiscation of any publication on campus is wrong and will not be tolerated ... we will respond vigorously to any future violations." But just this once, the Black Students Association will be forgiven. "The University must be a place where students can learn from their inevitable mistakes and misjudgments," said Fagin. "Openly facing difficult issues is what a great university is about." And completely ducking them is now the norm.

AND THEN RICHARD AVEDON WILL BRIEF US ON SOMALIA: "Bosnia as a theme begins in our senior fellows symposium, continues with an appearance by Franjo Tudjman, president of Croatia, in a debate on U.S. policy so far and in a special event for members and spouses ... *Vanity Fair*'s Annie Leibovitz presents her photographs of daily life in a besieged Sarajevo, including photos shown only at the council."—from the Council on Foreign Relations' calendar of general meetings, September 1993

HOME NEWS: With this issue, reporter-researcher Ruth Shalit becomes an associate editor of TNR. She'll be reporting on Washington politics and social and cultural issues. •

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WHITE HOUSE WATCH

BUSH II

By Fred Barnes

President Clinton has something in common with President Bush besides support for the North American Free Trade Agreement. He has an aversion to the abortion issue, too. Their positions are different, Clinton being pro-choice, Bush pro-life. But Clinton's way of coping with his discomfort is just like Bush's: he doesn't talk about abortion unless he absolutely has to. In marathon conversations with counselor David Gergen, the president has never broached the issue (Gergen hasn't either). This is odd, because a month before joining the White House staff last May, Gergen had written that Clinton's policies would open "the floodgates to universal abortion on demand, funded by taxpayers," and "ride roughshod over the sensibilities of most Americans." And Clinton was a regular reader of Gergen's columns in *U.S. News and World Report*. In fact, until just before his September 22 speech to Congress on health care, Clinton hadn't held a prolonged discussion on abortion for months.

Clinton is about as eager to step forward and lead the pro-choice fight as he is to invite Rush Limbaugh to the White House. He didn't lobby the House of Representatives last July when it took up the Hyde Amendment banning government-financed abortions. He made no effort to broker the dispute that derailed the Freedom of Choice Act over the summer. Why not? He wasn't asked to, explains Clinton aide George Stephanopoulos. And he certainly didn't offer. Nor is Clinton insistent that abortion be kept a guaranteed benefit in his health plan. It's in his proposal announced on September 22, but whether it stays or not is "negotiable," says a senior White House official. He also has declined to impose a pro-choice litmus test on nominees for federal district court judgeships.

The resilience of abortion opponents has surprised Clinton. He and his aides had thought the pro-life movement was dead, until they were shocked when the Hyde Amendment passed the House by eighty-five votes. In August, he anticipated a no-friction meeting with Pope John Paul II after he flew to Denver to welcome the Pontiff. "The expectation was he [the Pope] would not say anything that was confrontational or embarrassing to the president," says Gergen. The Pope didn't fully comply. Following their forty-five minute meeting, he proclaimed his opposition to Clinton's pro-choice policy. He cited "the inalienable dignity of every human being and the rights which flow from that dignity—including the right to life and the defense of life." The Pope also repeated part of a speech he'd delivered in 1987 in

THE RED ALBUM

A recent *New York Times* story coined the term "Market-Leninism" to describe the current momentous political and economic upheaval in China. Herewith a quick chart to place China's turmoil in a historical context:

Marxist-Leninism	Market-Leninism	McCartney-Lennonism
ideology	business	catchy pop tunes
Moscow	*Beijing*	*Liverpool*
1917	1993	"Yesterday"
KGB	*Kuomintang*	*Ringo Fan Club*
Dissidents sent to Siberia	Dissidents zapped with cattle prods	Dissidents purchase Rolling Stones albums
Stalin	*Deng Xiaoping*	*Murray the K*
middle-range ballistic missiles to Cuba	M-11 missile shipments to Pakistan	To number one like a rocket
All history is determined by economic conditions	*economic conditions are rendering history irrelevant*	*economical, hummable tunes a part of music history*
revolutionaries	Revlon	"Revolution No. 9"
single-party rule; no market competition	*single-party rule; competition in the marketplace*	*five singles in the U.S. Top 10 April 4, 1964*
crisis of legitimacy faced the old ideology	crisis of legitimacy faces the old ideology	Yoko Ono

DOUGLAS COUPLAND

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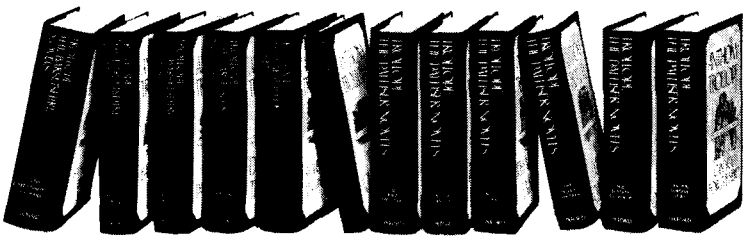

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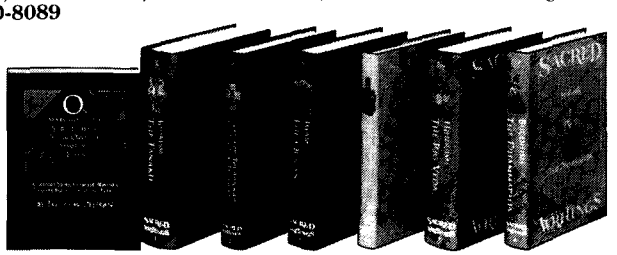

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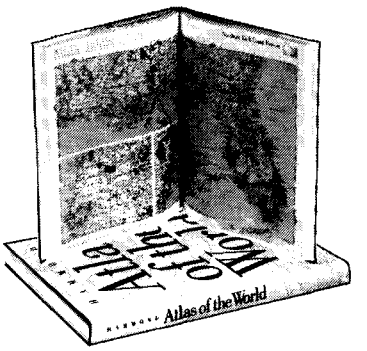

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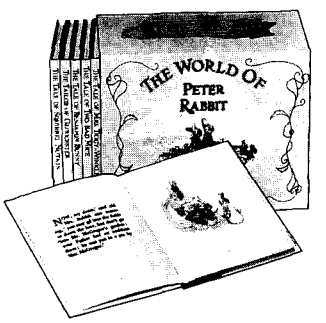

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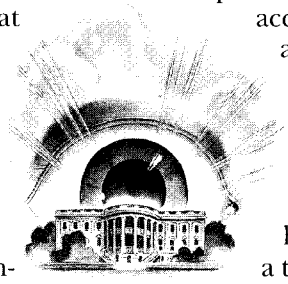
Detroit: "If you want equal justice for all and true freedom and lasting peace, then America, defend life."

Part of Clinton's problem is that he has two positions on abortion, and they don't always mesh. Before a straw poll at a Democratic gathering in Florida in 1991, Clinton adopted a moderate position (he won the poll). Abortion, he said, should be "safe, legal, but rare." This ambivalent view of abortion won't satisfy the Pope, yet it has political appeal since it's how most Americans feel. But implicit in this view is the notion that the right to an abortion is different from other rights. Clinton doesn't say the right to free speech or assembly should be exercised rarely. As president, Clinton signed four executive orders on abortion-related issues on January 22 and reaffirmed the safe, legal, but rare position: "Our goal should be to protect individual freedom, while fostering responsible decision-making, an approach that seeks to protect the right to choose, while reducing the number of abortions." In an interview on CNN with Larry King in July, he boasted that "in the many years I was governor [of Arkansas], the number of abortions performed dropped over the previous years."



Clinton's other position, which emerged during the 1992 campaign, is that of the abortion rights movement. He took more than a page to spell it out in *Putting People First,* the Clinton-Gore campaign treatise. He vowed to sign the Freedom of Choice Act ("Our government ... has no right to interfere with the difficult and intensely personal decisions women must sometimes make regarding abortion"). He promised to "urge" Congress to repeal the Hyde Amendment. He opposed "any federal attempt to limit access to abortion" through a mandatory waiting period or requirement of parental or spousal consent. He called for measures to protect against "radical demonstrators who illegally block health clinics." Clinton has followed through aggressively on this last promise. Attorney General Janet Reno testified on Capitol Hill in favor of legislation protecting abortion clinics, legislation likely to pass this year.

In his column last April, Gergen pointed to the clash between Clinton's two positions. As president, "he seems intent on keeping the first two-thirds of that promise" to make abortion safe, legal, but rare, Gergen wrote. "He is in serious danger, however, of breaking the last third." By backing repeal of the Hyde Amendment and proposing universal insurance coverage for abortion, Clinton would make abortion "a routine medical procedure easily available to all—no questions, no costs, no issues of morality or personal responsibility." Gergen asked: "This will make abortions 'rare'?" If Clinton prevails, he wrote, "there is a real possibility ... the number of abortions will soar again." The percentage of pregnancies ending in abortion doubled after the *Roe* v. *Wade* decision (from 12.9 percent to 23.1 percent), stabilizing at 25 percent only after the Hyde Amendment was passed in 1977.

Gergen also suggested Clinton was headed for political trouble on abortion. "Where most Americans have drawn the line is on paying for other people's abortions, especially abortions on demand," he said. Polls show that large majorities oppose government-funded abortions for the poor (69 percent in an ABC-*Washington Post* survey last year) or including abortion coverage in health reform (only 23 percent in favor in a recent CBS-*New York Times* poll). But Clinton doesn't have a passel of pro-life aides advising him to take these polls into account. I can only think of two Clintonites who are pro-lifers: Ray Flynn, the ambassador to the Vatican, and Paul Begala, unofficial White House adviser. Gergen is pro-choice.

Clinton senses the problem, hence his reluctance to talk about abortion in public or private. When confronted with the issue, he's usually conciliatory toward pro-lifers. At a town meeting in Chillicothe, Ohio, last February he praised a high school senior for voicing his objections to abortion. He downplays abortion coverage in his health plan. He's only for what's "traditionally covered in private health insurance policies," Clinton told MTV in May. (Actually, many policies don't cover abortion.) And he's ready to argue that his plan includes ways (family planning, preventive services, counseling) to curb abortions. Gergen said he finds this "encouraging." But the tension caused by Clinton's two positions won't go away. On September 20, five women Democratic senators visited him in the Oval Office and raised the abortion issue. He promised them he'd fight to kill the Hyde Amendment and preserve abortion coverage. But fight hard? Don't count on it. •

The NRA's fake allies.

GUNS AND POSES

By Osha Gray Davidson

As long as the National Rifle Association had the backing of police and law enforcement organizations, it was virtually unassailable: gun control could be framed as a liberal-vs.-conservative issue. A politician's vote for gun control was a vote against law and order. But in 1982 this intimidating formula was altered when the NRA opposed a ban on "cop-killer" bullets, ammunition that could penetrate police soft-body armor. Police groups were outraged. "The NRA is no longer a friend of law enforcement," declared one police union official. The police then organized themselves into a potent political lobby, and today their support gives politicians the cover they need to vote for measures like the Brady Bill, which requires a waiting

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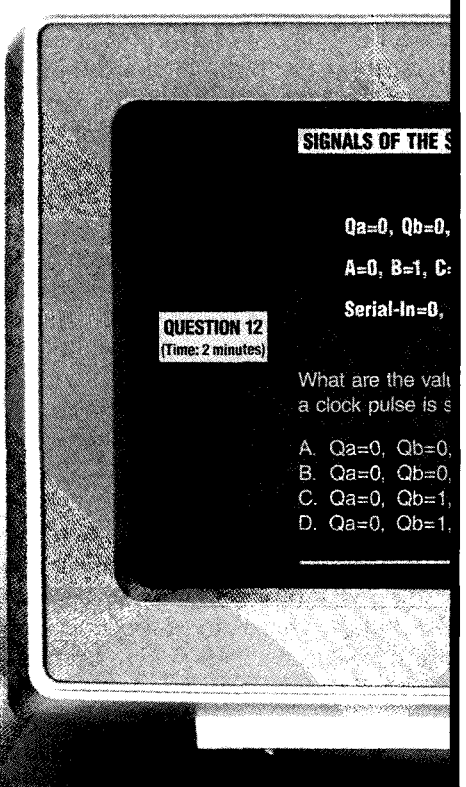

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period for handgun purchases and is likely to be voted on by Congress next month.

Of course, the NRA has not taken the "defection" of police organizations lying down. It launched an aggressive public relations offensive, bashing mainstream law enforcement groups and embracing a number of phony police associations. Early NRA efforts in this fight were clumsy. When Congress first voted on the Brady Bill in 1988, the NRA used 100 officers and prison guards as a backdrop for a press conference inveighing against the measure. The undertaking backfired when some of the participating policemen revealed they were actually strong supporters of the bill. They thought they had been invited to Washington merely to show their support for a new NRA law-enforcement unit.

The gun lobby's efforts quickly became more sophisticated, however. The NRA cultivated a relationship with Gerald Arenberg, a Miamian who runs a number of police-oriented organizations. Through its many publications, the NRA gives wide circulation to annual surveys conducted by Arenberg's National Association of Chiefs of Police (NACOP)—polls that support the lobby's contention that most chiefs oppose gun control. The NRA also backs Arenberg's projects. In 1991 *The Badge*, an NRA publication, devoted its front page to the opening of Arenberg's American Police Hall of Fame & Museum in Miami, calling it "one of the most modern, spectacular and uniquely special shrines in the nation." There are other ties, too. The public relations director of Arenberg's American Federation of Police (AFP) is a former associate editor of the *American Rifleman*, an NRA magazine.

Even without his links to the gun lobby Arenberg would not be a credible voice for law enforcement. "Anybody who puts any stock in what Gerald Arenberg says on law enforcement issues needs to see a psychiatrist," says Dewey Stokes, head of the 248,000-member Fraternal Order of Police. According to Jerald Vaughn, former executive director of the International Association of Chiefs of Police, the nation's oldest and largest group of command police officers, "[Arenberg's operation] is a fraud.... It was the kind of public identity that the NRA needed to appear legit. But when you begin to look at Gerald Arenberg, the bottom line is that he makes money."

Arenberg has a history of questionable business practices going back to the 1960s, when the AFP operated the National Law Enforcement Academy, a highly profitable mail-order operation selling "college-level" degrees to police officers. In 1969 the *Los Angeles Times* revealed that the chairman of the academy's "Academic Evaluation Committee" was a high school dropout who had assumed the title of Doctor. And although Arenberg is the executive director of an organization that purports to speak for chiefs of police, he hasn't held that title for years. Three decades ago he was briefly chief of the Golf, Illinois, police department, where he commanded a force of two part-time officers. NACOP's president, Dennis Ray Martin, has little more experience as a command officer; for one year he was chief of a police force for two small Michigan towns. He was also the department's only full-time officer.

The NRA also has looked to other police groups to legitimize its claims. For example, it frequently cites the positions of the Law Enforcement Alliance of America. While the LEAA supports "victims rights" and "pro-police" legislation, its mainstay is in fighting gun control measures such as the Brady Bill. But while it claims to be independent, the LEAA is, in fact, a counterfeit organization. The National Rifle Association bankrolled the group in early 1991, spending $100,000 to get it up and running. According to Craig Sandler, deputy director of the NRA's Law Enforcement Activities Division, when the gun lobby closed its law enforcement relations division in 1992, "some of those duties went to [the LEAA]." LEAA's first executive director was Leroy Pyle, a member of the NRA board of directors. Last April, LEAA's first vice president, Cincinnati policeman Harry Thomas, was also elected to the NRA board. LEAA board member Jimmy Trahin has appeared in commercials for the lobby.

The close association between the NRA and the LEAA extends to the man who now heads the police group: James Fotis. When Fotis took over as executive director of LEAA in November 1991, the organization's newsletter ran an extensive biography of its new leader, citing his years with the Lynbrook, New York, police department and several other positions. Not listed, however, was Fotis's most recent job: liaison in the law enforcement relations division at NRA headquarters in Washington. When Fotis took that position in April 1991, an NRA spokesperson stated that the new liaison "will supplement our plans to work even more closely with law enforcement professionals." That statement took on added meaning when Fotis left the NRA for the LEAA just seven months later.

Recently, another police organization, the Southern States Police Benevolent Association (SSPBA), received considerable attention for its survey of members' attitudes toward gun control. "We had simply had enough of every special interest group ... claiming they spoke for rank-and-file officers on the subject of gun control," stated SSPBA president Jack Roberts. The survey found that 86.5 percent of SSPBA members responding were opposed to the Brady Bill.

Although it's not mentioned in SSPBA literature, the group is linked to the LEAA. According to Roberts, the SSPBA president, the two groups share printing and mailing operations and LEAA lobbyists are the SSPBA's official voice on Capitol Hill. In addition to heading the SSPBA, Roberts also serves on the LEAA board of directors. To lend credibility to its members' poll, SSPBA hired a research firm, Spectrum Resources, Inc., of Tallahassee, Florida, to design and conduct the survey. But Spectrum Resources is not particularly independent either: its president is the son of the head of the Florida Police Benevolent Association, the organization that spun off the SSPBA in 1987. SSPBA research director Jim Merritt says he "probably surmised" the relationship between the two, but contends that the fact that the

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men are related doesn't taint the survey. What really matters, Merritt stresses, is that the survey itself is accurate. But that's just the problem—it isn't. According to Arthur Miller, a polling expert at the University of Iowa, the study is "biased" and "unscientific."

Thanks to the support of nearly every national police organization, a variety of new gun control measures are on the books: from an assault weapons ban in California to a one-handgun-purchase-a-month provision in Virginia. But if the gun lobby can convince the public that these uniformed impostors represent the views of the nation's law enforcement community, then timid politicians will once again withdraw their support for gun legislation. And if that happens, the war in our streets will continue to escalate, beyond reason or control.

OSHA GRAY DAVIDSON is author of *Under Fire: The NRA and the Battle for Gun Control* (Henry Holt).

A defense of Clinton's health plan.

THE HORSE'S MOUTH

By Walter Zelman

For any major change to occur in an area as important and as fraught as health care, at least three conditions must be met. First, there must be a sense of crisis: one that affects most segments of society. Second, there must be leadership from the executive branch. Without it, few initiatives can override the fragmentation of American government and politics. Third, change this deep doesn't arrive in America when one philosophical side narrowly overcomes another: it comes only with the emergence of broad consensus on how a crisis can be addressed. The first two conditions have already been met. The Clinton plan—a unique blend of health care reforms—has the potential to achieve the third.

For some time there has been agreement on what the current crisis now is. Thirty-seven million Americans are without insurance coverage, and every month another 2 million lose their insurance for some period of time. Millions more have just bare-bones policies, and the rest are (or should be) anxious about maintaining the coverage they have. Costs—for families, employers and government—are rising at rates two to three times that of inflation, and in many cases much faster, threatening the ability of private employers to maintain current benefits, and diminishing the country's capacity to invest and engage in other public and private enterprises.

The insurance marketplace is also dysfunctional. Competition among insurers over quality, service and price has given way to competition to find the least risky consumers. When 10 percent of individuals account for 75 percent of system costs, competition among insurers will be more over whom to enroll and less over how to care for all enrollees efficiently. The ties between insurance and employment compound the problem. Millions are unwilling to switch jobs for fear of loss of insurance or imposition, by a new employer's insurance program, of restrictions on treatments for which they or a family member are already covered.

Finally, there are inequities in our current financing structure. It is not just a case of the current system lacking progressivity; it can be outright regressive. Large employers or high-wage firms are more likely to insure their employees with more generous benefits and to pay higher shares of insurance premiums than are smaller or lower-wage employers. Large firms are also better able to self-insure, lowering administrative costs and using their purchasing power to drive harder bargains with providers. By contrast, smaller employers, with no market clout, have to buy insurance in the marketplace and pay what are often exorbitant administrative costs. Thus, those with the most secure and highest paying jobs usually get the best insurance and pay the least, while those with lower wages are more likely to get less insurance (if they have it at all) and pay more for it.

There is even considerable consensus around the causes of the health care crisis. When it comes to health care, the balance of power between the supply and demand sides has been anything but balanced. Most buyers have little information about the quality of service delivered by health care providers—doctors, hospitals, health maintenance organizations or insurance companies. It is difficult, if not impossible, to compare the value of all the plans offering marginally different levels of benefits and consumer cost-sharing. In fee-for-service medicine, still the main way we get health care, the incentive is to do (supply) more when less might be acceptable, or even better. And with consumer cost consciousness as low as it is (after all, the employer pays most of the premium, and the insurer most of the bill), the individual consumer has little incentive to question the decision to spend more.

In short, the demand side has had little ability to keep the supply side in check. (Indeed, in the ultimate violation of market economic theory, suppliers largely determine demand, telling us what we need and when we need it.) In the face of this failure, proponents of reform have generally fallen into two categories, each of which has had a political component (access and coverage) and an economic component (cost containment). Some—mostly Republicans and conservative Democrats—have advocated market-oriented solutions. They want reforms that will create a more level insurance playing field to reduce or eliminate the propensity of insurers to compete on risk selection. They may also endorse the creation of modest-sized purchasing pools to strengthen the market power of small employers. However, these reformers have generally been reluctant

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to endorse the means (e.g., mandates), the government intervention or the expenditures necessary to make the system serve everybody.

By contrast, many moderate and most liberal Democrats have demanded universal coverage, and have been willing to impose a mandate on employers or government to get there. Most important, they've believed that the goal of guaranteed coverage with cost control would inevitably mean relying more on government intervention than on market-driven reforms and adjustments.

The Clinton plan represents an attempt to enlist the best ideas of both market reform and government intervention. It embraces the goal of coverage for everybody, and recognizes that some degree of government intervention—including asking all to pay a share—will be required to achieve that goal. But it resists the temptation to micromanage the system, and leaves the bulk of delivery system reform and cost-control tasks to the private marketplace. It embraces means generally associated with conservatives (competition) to achieve ends (guaranteed coverage for all) generally associated with liberals.

The mix of government intervention and market reform is sequential. It begins with intervention to restructure the insurance market—community rating, competition on price and service, etc.—and to create health alliances, to strengthen the market power of consumers and employers. It also advocates a limit on insurance premium increases as a guarantee that cost-control goals are reached. But in between these book-ends of intervention, it expects market competition to be the true engine of reform, the primary means to control costs, improve quality, enhance consumer choice and generally increase the value of our health care dollars. Advocates of both purer government intervention and purer market-based strategies may object to such a hybrid. But there are sound political and policy reasons for avoiding the purism of either approach.

On the competition side, the Clinton plan borrows heavily from managed competition. It creates purchasing cooperatives, called health alliances, run by boards of employers and consumers, that contract with competing health plans to deliver a federally guaranteed set of standardized benefits. Consumers may choose any plan offered by the alliance. Though the plans are allowed to charge different premiums, they must accept all who choose to enroll (capacity allowing). They are paid by the alliance on a risk-adjusted basis. Plans that enroll higher cost populations will be compensated for doing so.

Applying these rules and principles will force health plans—be they HMOs, preferred provider arrangements, conventional fee-for-service insurers—to compete on price, service and quality before a more informed, cost-conscious consumer. Such competition should produce not just lower prices, but greater efficiency and value in the delivery of care as well. Of course, many market-oriented advocates won't be satisfied. They will object, for one thing, to the exclusion of most health care benefits from taxable income. And they're right that the exclusion subsidizes benefits compared with other commodities, and that consumers would be more cost-conscious if they had to pay for their share of health plan costs with after-tax dollars. But it would be difficult, if not impossible, for the president to offer a proposal that would be viewed by many as a heavy tax on middle-income Americans.

As an alternative, the Clinton plan says that if employers contribute more than 80 percent of the average premium cost, they must offer the employee choosing a lower cost plan the difference—in cash—between the cost of that plan and the employer's contribution. In this way the employee will always have some economic incentive to choose a lower cost plan.

Many market-oriented reformers may also oppose the Clinton plan's proposed limit on health care spending. They fear that it might restrict the flow of capital to health plans. Moreover, a fear that future premium increases will be restricted could deter health plans from pricing aggressively, thus undermining the capacity of managed competition to achieve cost- reduction goals.

These are real worries, and the exact positioning of spending caps will have to be closely watched. But the targets are only safety nets for—not the driving force of—cost containment: if the competitive mechanisms work as the market-oriented reformers expect, they won't be exceeded. The reassurance of a spending limit is essential because if government is going to ask all businesses and individuals to purchase health care, and provide subsidies to those who cannot afford their share, then the government must also guarantee the participants that increases in their payments will stay within reasonable bounds. Without such a guarantee, reform would have no chance.

For the government interventionists, the Clinton plan also has much to offer. They will like the universal coverage, the proposals for community rating and other insurance reforms and the limit on health care spending. They'll also appreciate the ability of states to choose the single-payer approach. And while some might prefer that all individuals be in one pool, they will also recognize that regional health alliances will be large, composed of all except those individuals who work for employers of 5,000 or more and those in Medicare.

Still, many who have advocated more regulatory approaches—especially those who favor the Canadian-style "single-payer" approach—may be dissatisfied with a plan that relies so heavily on market forces. Specifically, they may object to the way in which health plans are allowed to compete on price. Such competition, they fear, could produce a two-tiered system in which low-income individuals become isolated in lower-cost—and lower quality—HMOs.

The president's plan includes a variety of measures aimed at preventing such an outcome: many low-income individuals will be subsidized to average-cost, not just lowest-cost plans; quality measures and consumer satisfaction measures can warn against declining quality and access in lower-cost plans; and a fee schedule, above

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which no physician can charge in fee-for-service plans, may make them more affordable to middle-, and even lower-middle-income people.

But, ultimately, the alternative to price competition is one price for all, and it is difficult to envision such a model in the American scheme. Finding the balance between providing an acceptable level of care for all and a price the nation could afford might prove impossible. Thus the Clinton plan's compromise: guarantee all the same benefits, delivered in a quality setting; allow those who wish to pay more for the same benefits delivered with more amenities and options the right to do so.

To win support from both sides of the health care debate, the president's supporters will need to convince skeptical individuals and organizations that the plan is truly a synthesis of the best each approach has to offer rather than a political compromise between them; that good politics, in this case, is also the best policy. They will have to convince both sides that their glasses are three-quarters full—that the market vs. government intervention debate is no longer, if it ever was, a zero-sum game.

WALTER ZELMAN, architect of California's Garamendi plan, helped draft the Clinton health care proposal.

Regional hospitals: a health care cure?

HOME REMEDY

By Sherwin B. Nuland

While Hillary Rodham Clinton and Ira Magaziner were focusing the attention of their health task force on benefits packages and consumer alliances, short (or no) shrift was being given to one of the greatest concerns expressed by the actual users of our medical care system: the equitable distribution of high-quality medical services throughout the country. Whether they choose to enter their local hospital or a big city medical center, patients want to be assured that they will have access to diagnostic and treatment facilities that are of equal caliber.

The issue of local access to excellence has never been satisfactorily addressed by the vaunted Canadian system; it continues to be one of their program's glaring defects. To benefit from sophisticated medical technologies, Canadian patients often must be transferred to major medical centers in cities far from home, sometimes hundreds of miles away. And yet, in one form or another, a solution to the access question has been proposed over and over again for more than a century—ever since a prototype first hit print in *Hygeia, A City of Health*, a utopian book written in 1876 by an Englishman named Benjamin Ward. For a variety of reasons, conditions never seemed ripe to carry it out. Without doubt, the time has finally come.

The solution is to be found in the fact that, with few exceptions, each of our nation's 126 medical schools is potentially capable of overseeing the needs of the region in which it is situated. Also, thanks largely to the Hill-Burton program of the Truman administration, the United States is endowed with a network of local hospitals that can satisfy the needs of their surrounding populations. The health care delivery scheme that would provide an organized structure for the Clinton plan is one divided among the 126 centers. From each of these centers expertise would radiate through a system of closely linked affiliations with every community hospital in the region. Such a system lends itself to the principle of flexibility of choice that is basic to the Clinton proposals and to the protection of each state's or region's option to choose its own payment and organizational methods.

The most recent attempt at regionalization was made in 1964 as part of Lyndon Johnson's Great Society. Sadly, the president's efforts fell prey to bad press and poor organization. Called "Regional Medical Planning," a part of the Heart Disease, Cancer and Stroke Amendments of 1965, the Great Society's legislation aimed to promote regional centers of excellence at universities, from which the fruits of medical progress were to be disseminated to community hospitals. But the program's goals were unclear and its scope led to fears that government would intrude on the lives of average Americans. In time, each of the participating groups (hospitals, organized medicine and the public) began to mistrust each others' motives. Opposition grew when it was discovered that universities would be permitted to use federal dollars to pursue their own pet projects. Even worse, medical schools at the time were inept at providing good basic primary and secondary care; they were also inefficient and very expensive. As William Kissick—now a professor of health care systems at the University of Pennsylvania, but then a legislative assistant to the RMP planning group—put it at a recent reunion of the program's participants, the regionalization of three decades ago "was the right concept, presented to the wrong culture .... Much has been changed in a quarter of a century. We need regionalization more than ever."

Not only the economy but the entire atmosphere of the American medical care system is vastly different than it was thirty years ago. In that biomedically simpler time, only 6 percent of America's gross national product went to health. Today, that figure is 14 percent, and it is expected to rise to 18 percent by 2000. We are trapped in what has been called the iron triangle of health care: cost containment, quality and access. Widening one angle only narrows the others. Regionalization offers a way out of this trap, for it addresses quality and access, and perhaps cost containment as well.

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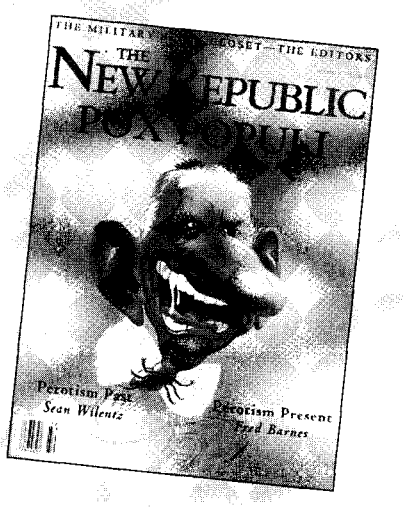

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Give 'em health, Harry

Without a doubt, Bill Clinton has had a hard time getting the medical establishment to support his plan for health care reform. But the resistance he has met in 1993 is timid compared with the firestorm the American Medical Association unleashed on Harry Truman almost fifty years ago.

On November 19, 1945, three months after taking office, Truman became the first American president to support national health insurance. Truman's plan was the "single-payer system," in which health care would be financed and administered like Social Security through a 3 percent payroll tax paid half by the employer and half by the employee. It would cover medical, hospital and nursing care for everyone. Citizens would be free to choose their doctors from a competitive marketplace, while a federal health insurance agency would reimburse doctors on fee schedules set through negotiations in various localities. As Truman put it: "The best hospitals, the finest research laboratories and the most skillful physicians are of no value to those who cannot obtain their services."

According to Monte M. Poen, author of *Harry S Truman Versus the Medical Lobby*, Truman's support for a radical reformation of health care evolved from his dismay that one-third of the men reporting for the draft during World War II were physically unfit to serve. What's more, Truman's populist foundation was shaken by the economic inequities of medical care. James Ewing, a retired publisher whose father, Oscar Ewing, advised Truman on the issue, recalls, "Truman felt the little guy was getting shafted by the health care system." The little guy agreed. A November 1945 poll found that 58 percent of Americans who had heard of Truman's proposal approved of it. So did Eleanor Roosevelt, Fiorello La Guardia and RCA chief David Sarnoff.

Truman's plan defied one of the nation's most powerful lobbies: the AMA. The organization fought the proposal, insisting that it would transform doctors "into clock watchers" and "slaves." It balked at a 1947 federal study that found that 325,000 Americans died each year for lack of health care: "The true measure of medical progress," the AMA countered, "is not how many die, but how long they live before they die."

The AMA's hand was strengthened by the 1946 election, which brought a Republican majority to Congress. Truman was unable to muster the support needed to pull his legislation out of committee. His opponents in Congress used Red Scare rhetoric honed by the AMA: in 1947 a House subcommittee investigating national health insurance reached a "firm conclusion" that "American communism holds this program as a cardinal point in its objectives," and that "known Communists and fellow travelers within federal agencies are at work diligently with federal funds in furtherance of the Moscow party line."

The war against Truman's plan became so dirty that in July 1947 Raymond Rich Associates, a public relations firm hired by the AMA to improve its image, resigned in protest, citing the lobby's unwillingness "to put the public first, and to become adequate in its responsibilities." The AMA responded by hiring a less squeamish P.R. firm.

Truman, however, didn't back down. During his 1948 campaign, he blasted the "do-nothing" Republican congressional majority for capitulating to health industry lobbies. "The medical lobby says [national health insurance is] un-American," Truman said. "I put it to you. Is it un-American to visit the sick, aid the afflicted or comfort the dying? I thought that was simple Christianity."

The battle became even hotter after Truman's surprising re-election in 1948. In response to his campaign promise to pass national health insurance, the AMA, for the first time in its 102-year history, demanded mandatory dues (of $25) from its 142,000 members. The money was used to finance a $4 million anti-reform campaign through 1949 and 1950. At the time, it was the largest legislative lobbying campaign in American history.

Truman's opponents were keen to keep fighting health care reform with scary cold war rhetoric. In December 1949, the AMA sent every member of Congress a Christmas gift: *The Road Ahead* by John Flynn. The book's cover portrayed a doctor and a nurse leading a group of citizens toward a signpost labeled, "To Socialism." The work argued that Truman had been duped by "hooded Socialists." Don't be fooled, Flynn warned, by the fact that government planners "wrap themselves in a mantle called anti-communism .... they are Socialist planners—and unless they are ... stopped, *they will destroy the country.*"

Even without such pressure, Truman faced serious obstacles in Congress. By the late 1940s, southern Democrats, angered at the administration's pro-union and anti-segregationist slant, were siding with the Republicans to defeat many of Truman's legislative proposals. The AMA worked to ensure that health reform would go down in defeat as well.

In one two-week period right before the 1950 congressional elections, the AMA spent more than $1 million on advertising, and persuaded large health-related companies to cosponsor $2 million worth of similar ads. This paid for full-page anti-reform ads in each of the nation's 10,000 newspapers and on 16,000 radio stations. The Committee for the Nation's Health, the one private lobbying group established to support reform, countered all the publicity they could afford with an annual budget, in 1950, of just $36,000.

Anti-reform propaganda also reached Americans in their doctors' offices. The AMA distributed 55 million pamphlets warning, "Guard your health, guard your pocketbook, socialized medicine would rob both." The pamphlet reported Lenin's declaration that, "Socialized medicine is the keystone to the arch of the Socialist state."

Lenin, in reality, never said this. What's more, Truman repeatedly emphasized that his plan was *not* socialized medicine. The president never proposed making doctors and hospitals part of the federal bureaucracy. He simply argued for a federal insurance program that would finance and reimburse patients—all of whom would be free to choose their health care in an open marketplace. Such facts were conveniently lost in the growing hysteria of the McCarthy era.

The 1950 election saw the defeat of a few liberal senators who had campaigned for national health insurance. Truman's proposal was dead. "I have had some bitter disappointments as president," he later wrote, "but the one that has troubled me most, in a personal way, has been the failure to defeat organized opposition to a national compulsory health insurance."

JONATHAN GREENBERG

Jonathan Greenberg is a freelance journalist specializing in economic issues.

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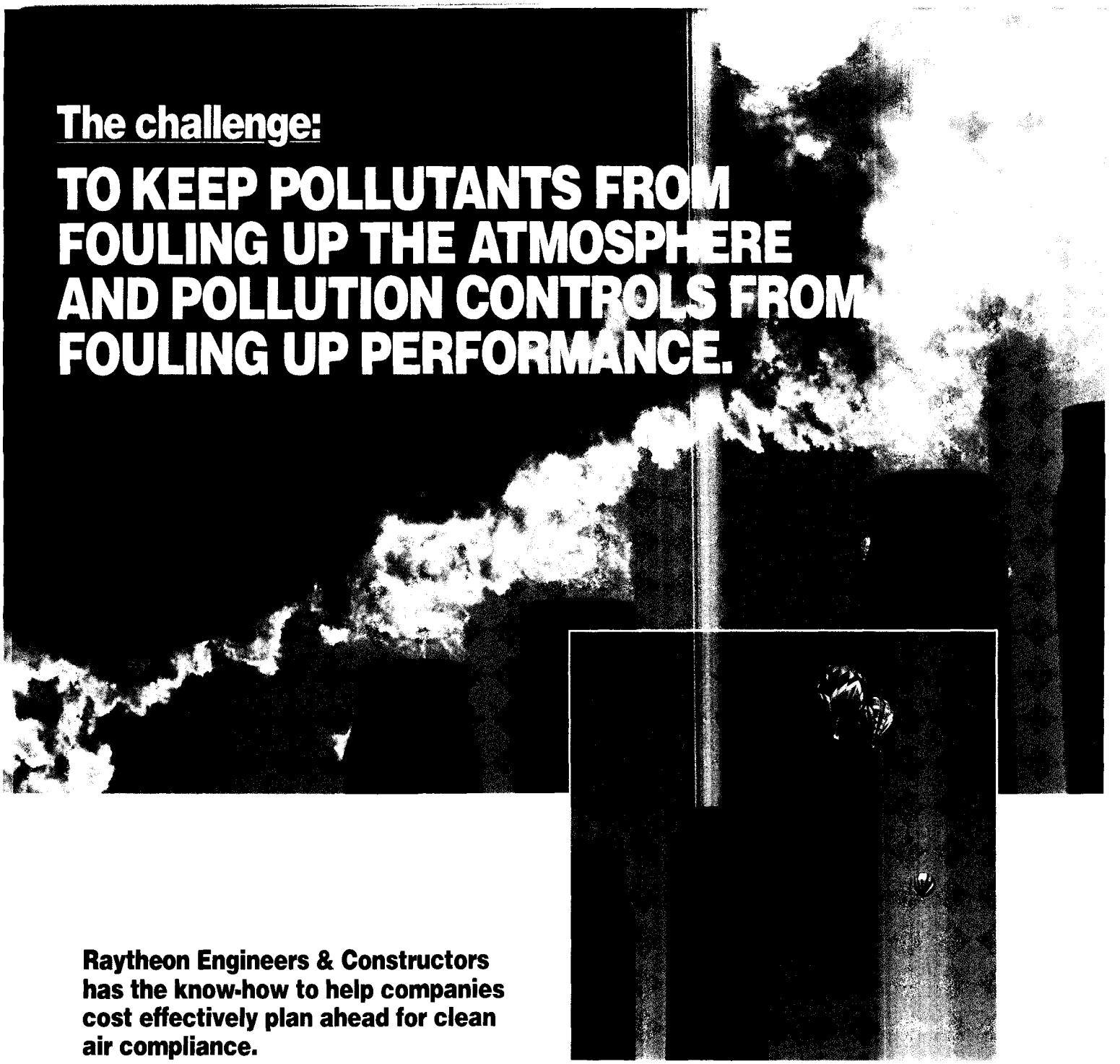

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What a refreshing relief from the current debate, which seems to direct all its energy on cost containment and addresses access primarily in terms of *financial* access; the definition of quality remains vague and its standards arbitrary.

There have been other changes, too. The medical schools are much more involved in the community than they were twenty-five years ago. During the past decade, they have been turning to community hospitals to learn how to deliver primary and secondary care efficiently. The major centers and the local hospitals need each other as never before.

A new approach to regionalization would incorporate provisions to avoid the pitfalls and suspicions that led to its earlier demise. Properly written affiliation contracts would protect the autonomy of the local hospitals, and the educational leadership of the medical schools; they would also provide for equal access to the appropriate facilities for all patients. Such contracts could guarantee that key physicians from local hospitals are also on the faculty of their regional medical schools and that they share responsibility for residency training, rotation of medical students and clinical research. These doctors also should have a voice in the decisions at the school that affect the network.

Moreover, every new medical staff appointment at any of the affiliated hospitals should be approved by representatives of all the hospitals in the region. This would encourage uniformly high quality and continued interaction between the various hospitals. Another advantage of region-wide coordination of appointments is that it would enable hospitals to assess exactly what kind of staffing they need. By admitting to its staff only the number of physicians required to fulfill the needs of its own community, each local hospital would help solve the problem of overpopulation of specialists, and be certain that all of its specialists are fully employed in ways that make the best use of their skills.

Hospitals in each region should be encouraged to develop incentives that would attract physicians toward salaried employment as full-time members of the medical staff. This bonding of doctors and hospitals would go a long way toward mitigating or even eliminating the image of physicians as individual entrepreneurs, and of the American health care system as a "cottage industry."

It's worth noting, too, that once all doctors are salaried, a more equitable distribution of physician income can be made within the area served by each local hospital and its region. Perhaps we'll finally be able to leave behind an insidious system in which talented young people are deterred from primary care or family practice because those careers pay much less than the high-tech specialties so highly valued by third-party payers. If the administration is really serious about seeking ways to increase the proportion of family doctors to 50 percent, equitable apportioning of income will help achieve that end. A corollary to the idea of hospital-based medicine is that all health functions in the community, including public health and health education, would grow up around the hospitals. Perhaps hospitals would become a source of community.

Any plan should see to it that each of the 126 networks would have access to cutting edge advances, continuing high caliber biomedical education and the backup clinical care that might be necessary for patients entering their local hospitals. When required, the transfer of patients from smaller to larger facilities must be expeditious and uncomplicated.

Consortium-wide decisions will be made with each of the 126 networks to determine which participating hospitals will provide which kinds of tertiary and other highly specialized care. This is an efficient way to prevent duplication of expensive services and equipment, and a judicious method of deciding when an unsteady hospital should be closed down. Less and less will it be necessary for patients to travel long distances from their communities to obtain high levels of modern care. Decentralization will increase as the system takes hold.

Finally, the sharing of educational opportunities and input is not to be restricted to the medical staff alone. By enlisting consultants from engineering, business administration, communications and health policy, the full resources of the university and the business community can be focused on the problems of the region's hospitals. Equally important is the fact that a regional organization carries with it a mechanism through which hospital CEOs may coordinate their efforts. Such joint undertakings will require the loosening of present antitrust regulations, a proposition that Hillary Rodham Clinton has already endorsed. Who knows, it may even be possible to integrate hospitals, physicians and health insurance into the same localized plan.

Comprehensive governance of such a decentralized system is crucial to the scheme's success. What will be required under the newly organized American health-care enterprise is leadership from nothing less than the authority of a subcabinet position, perhaps an Assistant Secretary of Health and Human Services whose office is designated for that purpose only. The president's proposed National Health Board seems too diffuse a concept for a system that will need direct overall management and a hierarchy of oversight and responsibility. No board will be able to control an industry as complicated as health care.

In our modern medical culture—one that is ready for regionalization—hospitals serve as centers of community caring, education and the two great American principles of volunteerism and pluralism. Each one is a social institution in the community it serves. Each one should be associated with an academic center in a manner that promotes excellence close to home. In this way, the benisons of the world's best biomedical science can be made available for every citizen.

SHERWIN B. NULAND, an attending surgeon at the Yale New Haven Hospital, is the author of *Doctors: The Biography of Medicine* (Knopf, 1988).

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You call this a think tank?

FAUX PAS

By Robert Wright

The reputation of economist Pat Choate isn't what it used to be. *Save Your Job, Save Our Country*—the anti-NAFTA tract he co-authored with Ross Perot—is the reason. Though people across America may continue to buy and believe the book, its factual inaccuracy and intellectual shoddiness are well known inside the beltway (see "Sucking Sound," TNR, September 20 & 27). The average journalist or policy analyst wouldn't dream of using the book as a source of data.

With Choate discredited on NAFTA, where can a person turn for a reliable supply of anti-NAFTA fact and argument? The logical choice would seem to be the Economic Policy Institute. EPI was founded in the mid-1980s, partly with labor union money, and has spent most of its life criticizing the policies of Republican presidents. Since Bill Clinton took office, it has been cast by the press as the voice of old-fashioned liberalism in the struggle for his soul (versus, especially, the neoliberal Progressive Policy Institute). In recent months EPI has become known for providing, as *The New York Times* puts it, "much of the intellectual firepower against the North American Free Trade Agreement." The fax machines of journalists all over Washington attest to this firepower.

The institute's NAFTA campaign is spearheaded by its president, Jeff Faux. Of the six briefing papers in EPI's NAFTA kit, he authored or co-authored four. Faux's latest and boldest work is a paper called "The Failed Case for NAFTA." This, presumably, is state-of-the-art Economic Policy Institute scholarship.

It does not inspire confidence. Though Faux's paper isn't devoid of plausible points, they are surrounded by factual inaccuracy, warped economic logic and the misrepresentation of opposing views. On a distortion-per-page basis, Faux's work may rival the Choate-Perot book.

The most striking assertion in Faux's paper is that "NAFTA will reduce the real incomes of a majority of U.S. workers." This belief is shared by almost no economists and, if true, is cause for real skepticism about NAFTA. What is its basis? Aside from some fairly informal argumentation by Faux, the only apparent basis is a paper by UCLA economist Edward Leamer. Leamer, Faux writes, "concludes from his research that one effect of NAFTA will be an average wage loss of $1,000 per worker for the lower 70 percent of the U.S. labor force." This is a favorite Faux statistic. He includes it in a paper co-authored with EPI economist Thea Lee and in two op-ed pieces (one co-authored with Lee), and it shows up prominently in an EPI press release. One place it doesn't show up is in a paper written by UCLA economist Edward Leamer.

Leamer did project a $1,000 drop in real wages for non-professional workers over the next decade, but he did it simply by extrapolating from trends of the 1970s and 1980s. He didn't assume the passage of NAFTA; he just assumed things would keep going the way they've been going, including persistent competition from cheap labor in developing countries. Leamer did write that this assumption would be "particularly" valid if NAFTA is ratified, but he doesn't believe defeating NAFTA would make a sizeable dent in the $1,000. The only way to do that, he says, is to defeat NAFTA *and* raise trade barriers against many low-wage countries. Leamer stresses that the $1,000 was never meant to reflect the impact of NAFTA. He diplomatically says Faux has "mislabeled" his data and, when pressed, agrees that Faux's citation is "extremely misleading."

Leamer, by the way, supports NAFTA. Given the costs of protectionism, he recommends continued free trade along with a greatly raised government investment in education to produce more high-skill workers.

Faux's characterization of NAFTA's substance isn't reliable, either. Sounding a theme that occasioned several pages of dishonesty in the Choate-Perot book, he writes, "NAFTA will require states to permit Mexican truckers to drive on U.S. highways despite the fact that they are not regulated to meet U.S. standards for health and safety." This is wrong. Mexican truck drivers would be obliged to comply with every relevant federal and state regulation.

Choate and Perot, by the way, were masterfully slippery on this point. Their seeming claim that Mexican drivers needn't comply with U.S. law metamorphosed almost imperceptibly into the weaker claim that verifying compliance would be hard. They explained how truckers "frequently change their routes to avoid weigh stations and safety inspections." Yes, enforcement is always a problem, whether the driver is Mexican or American. But it's easier to scare people with the image of a swarthy, gap-toothed Mexican swilling Cuervo Gold while doing eighty-five in an overloaded eighteen-wheeler.

Faux calls himself an economist and is often identified as one in the press. But he doesn't have a Ph.D. in economics, or even a master's degree. Stressing that he did some graduate work and spent years in a Bureau of Labor Statistics job with the title "economist," he decries the "guild" mentality that fixates on credentials. Fair enough. Still, he does sometimes say things that suggest less than total immersion in the basic principles of economics.

For example, at one point in his paper he writes about "a major contradiction in the pro-NAFTA argument. If NAFTA is to prevent a crisis in Mexico, it can only do so if the U.S. runs a large persistent trade

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deficit with that country. But if NAFTA is going to create jobs in the U.S., we must run a *surplus* with Mexico." The first claim may be wrong, but at least it's arguable. The second claim is just wrong.

Let's do a thought experiment. Suppose NAFTA brings overall export growth in Mexico and in the United States, markedly raising the number of jobs in both countries. (This sort of mutual growth is the textbook expectation for freer trade, and history is full of examples.) And suppose Mexico's exports rise faster, so that, at the end of the decade, it has erased its $5 billion trade deficit with the United States and is running a surplus. NAFTA will have brought the United States lots of jobs and a trade deficit. We can't be sure this will happen, of course. But we can be sure it's *possible*, which is what Faux denies in claiming that we "must run a *surplus* with Mexico" if NAFTA is going to create American jobs.

When I called Faux, he argued this point for about five minutes before downshifting: Okay, he said, it's possible *in principle* for freer trade to bring a country both a trade deficit and more jobs. But in the case of NAFTA, it's impossible. Why? He cited the "efficiency gains" from NAFTA calculated in the book *NAFTA: An Assessment* by Gary Hufbauer and Jeffrey Schott of the Institute for International Economics. These gains, he said, aren't nearly high enough to support such a scenario.

I called Hufbauer. He said Faux is wrong about a trade surplus being a prerequisite for job gains (though Hufbauer estimates that the United States will, in fact, enjoy both). As for Faux's using Hufbauer's "efficiency gains" estimate to back up this claim: "That's a non sequitur. It's a logical non sequitur."

This is not just an elementary error on Faux's part. It is a very telling error. It exudes the sense that trade is a zero-sum game; we can win or Mexico can win, but not both. The heart of the reason that virtually all economists favor NAFTA is that trade (like economic exchange in general) is manifestly *not* a zero-sum game. Both countries can benefit. Obviously, if you harbor a deep resistance to this principle, you'll have trouble liking NAFTA.

Like many effective rhetoricians, Faux has a fondness for the straw man. He writes, for example: "Moreover, it is illogical to argue that because jobs are already being exported, we should export even more." So much for all the people who have been making *that* argument.

This is harmless enough, but in other parts of Faux's paper the misrepresentation is more subtle and more consequential. At one point he belittles the lower prices American consumers will get out of NAFTA, citing one (relatively low) estimate of the savings as $2 billion a year. "Thus, according to NAFTA's own supporters, two cents per day per person is the potential long-term benefit that we are told justifies the risks of unemployment, community dislocation, environmental degradation, increased social disruption in Mexico and the expanded immigration that will inevitably result."

First of all, it is extremely misleading to suggest that most NAFTA supporters think NAFTA will bring all these calamities, which therefore need "justifying." Many, probably most, supporters believe immigration will drop as Mexican living standards improve (though some say it will rise in the short run). And many believe the long-term environmental effects will be good.

The larger distortion in this Faux passage is the implication—in the strict sense of the word: it logically follows from what Faux has said—that NAFTA supporters rely *wholly* on reduced prices to justify any NAFTA ills. All economists expect NAFTA to create American jobs, and most expect it to create more than it destroys; and the new jobs will almost surely be, on balance, higher-wage jobs than the ones they will replace. This alone would arguably justify NAFTA's dislocations—especially when you consider that in the long run the destroyed jobs could be preserved only with continued, and perhaps ever costlier, protection. Further justification, some NAFTA supporters say, are the very effects on environment and immigration that Faux pretends they don't envision. To say that the case for NAFTA rests entirely on the savings it will bring consumers isn't even half right.

Questioned on this, Faux sticks to his guns. Though consumer savings may not be the *whole* NAFTA argument (which, again, is really what he wrote), they are "the spine and rib of the free trade argument." Well, he's entitled to his opinion. But a year ago in an op-ed piece he wrote, "The central economic argument of supporters of NAFTA is this: The loss of 'low-wage' jobs to Mexican imports of consumer goods will be more than offset by U.S. workers moving up the ladder to higher-paying jobs created by increased U.S. exports of producer goods."

In Washington, the gross misrepresentation of opposing views—and reality in general—is a way of life. Politicians do it, lobbyists do it, second-rate pundits do it. But analysts at good think tanks don't do it, and the Economic Policy Institute styles itself as a real think tank. Even at think tanks that are notorious for their advocacy (e.g., the Heritage Foundation), you seldom find the frequency of distortion that Faux's work exhibits. All of the above examples (except for that last op-ed quote) come from a single fourteen-page paper. That's a fair amount of bang per buck—too much for EPI to be called with entire accuracy a major supplier of anti-NAFTA "*intellectual* firepower."

Of course, as Faux has noted, there are examples of distortion on the other side of the NAFTA debate. But there's a difference. If you take away all NAFTA supporters who have a record of distortion, you're still left with legions of economists, liberal and conservative, who have looked closely at NAFTA, back it and can argue scrupulously on its behalf. If you take away Pat Choate and the Economic Policy Institute, what is left in the way of reputedly academic opposition to NAFTA? I don't know of any. But if I were a newspaper reporter or news show booker looking for a credible representative, I'd start my search now. •

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Where We Stand

By Albert Shanker, President
American Federation of Teachers

Outrageous Outcomes

Many education people are worried because ultra right-wing groups have become very active in opposing a reform effort known as outcomes-based education (OBE). In a couple of cases, these groups have succeeded in getting provisions of OBE legislation altered or even blocking the legislation altogether. Some educators are afraid that the fight about OBE could lead to a takeover of American education by the radical right. Is there any basis for these fears?

Outcomes-based education embodies a number of sound ideas. One is that the traditional way of looking at education in terms of inputs—how many courses a student has taken and how many years he or she has spent in school—doesn't tell you much about what the kid has learned. Seat-time is no gauge of educational attainment.

But suppose, instead of messing around with inputs, you set standards or outcomes and allow individual schools figure out the best way to help their students attain them. And suppose you base assessments on these standards so you can find out how well students—and schools—are doing.

All this sounds fine—and it is. The problem is not with measuring outcomes instead of inputs; it is with the particular outcomes that OBE reforms propose to measure. OBE reformers have the rhetoric of higher standards down pat: They talk about world-class standards and the skills needed to compete in a global economy. But whereas the education standards in other industrialized countries call for things like solving algebraically and by graph simultaneous linear equations or analyzing the causes of the Cold War, OBE standards are vague and fluffy. For example, among the 55 proposed in Pennsylvania were:

- "All students know and use, when appropriate, community health resources."
- "All students demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of families, their historical development, and the cultural, economic, social and political factors affecting them."

Ohio's 24 outcomes called for high school graduates to be able to:

- "Function as a responsible family member."
- "Maintain physical, emotional and social well-being."
- "Establish priorities to balance multiple life roles."

OBE standards include academic outcomes, but they are very few and so vague that they would be satisfied by almost any level of achievement, from top-notch to minimal. In other words, they are no improvement over what we have now. Pennsylvania's writing outcome calls for "All students [to] write for a variety of purposes, including to narrate, inform, and persuade, in all subject areas." In an excellent school, this could mean a portfolio of short stories, several 1000-word essays and numerous shorter ones. In a poor school, it could mean three paragraphs loaded with misspellings.

OBE standards include academic outcomes, but they are very few and so vague that they would be satisfied by almost any level of achievement, from top-notch to minimal.

Vaguely worded outcomes like this will not send a message to students, teachers and parents about what is required of youngsters. Nor will they help bridge the enormous gap between schools where students are expected to achieve—and do—and schools where anything goes. They put no pressure on schools or teachers to ask more of students or on students themselves to work harder. Instead of the change we need, they encourage business as usual.

The radical right has a point when it worries that a school will try to find out whether a student is "a responsible family member" by asking a lot of questions that are none of the school's business or that youngsters will be indoctrinated about family styles that run counter to their religious beliefs. Even paranoids have enemies. But the academic issues these outcomes raise are far more troubling.

In addition to their fuzziness, there is the problem of the large number of outcomes proposed. This sounds demanding, but it's the opposite. The more outcomes are required, the less likely that any of them will be achieved. It's clearly a case where more is less—and less would be more.

Teachers have been asked to assume so many roles that they are already spread thin, and they won't be able to pay attention to all of these new outcomes. They'll pick and choose. And it's a lot easier to schmooze with kids about "life roles" than to make sure they can do geometry theorems or read *Macbeth*. In an educational version of Gresham's law, the fluffy will drive out the solid and worthwhile.

The radical right is a small group, and if it's gaining momentum, it is not because Americans are turning to the right but because many of them are correctly suspicious of the outcomes proposed by outcomes-based education—that is why the Pennsylvania Federation of Teachers withheld endorsement of OBE legislation in its state. Those who are pushing for this reform should wake up and realize that, as presently conceived, outcomes-based education will do a lot to advance the cause of the radical right and nothing to raise student achievement.

Mr. Shanker's comments appear in this ad under the auspices of the American Federation of Teachers. Reader correspondence is invited. Address your letters to Mr. Shanker at the AFT, 555 New Jersey Avenue, N.W. Washington, D.C. 20001. © 1993 by Albert Shanker.

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History vs. NAFTA.

THE DIVIDE

By John B. Judis

If the North American Free Trade Agreement had been proposed a decade ago, it probably would have passed Congress easily and would have been ignored by the public—just as the Caribbean Basin Initiative was. Instead, it is now arguably the most explosive issue in American politics. Not since the tariff battle of 1832—when South Carolinians threatened secession—have Americans been as consumed by a trade issue. Nor have the political repercussions been as broad: major parties have been split, ideological divides have been crossed.

This moment of crisis has been a long time coming in American politics; it's the product of two converging trends. The free trade alliance that dominated American trade policy from World War II through the 1980s has been breaking up. The corporate CEOs and investment bankers, labor union officials, consumer activists and local politicians who once worked closely together for free trade are now at odds. At the same time, a combustible mixture of economic nationalism and populism has re-emerged in American life. Ross Perot and others have made NAFTA a symbol of elite betrayal. Opposition to NAFTA—like opposition fifteen years ago to the Panama Canal treaty—has become a test of political patriotism.

The roots of the controversy lie in the collapse of the free trade alliance. The alliance was formed in the 1920s and solidified after World War II. It was based on the understanding that the high tariffs that had prevailed for much of the previous century had become unnecessary and potentially harmful. They were no longer necessary because American manufacturers were now generally equal, if not superior, to their European competitors. They were harmful because—particularly in the wake of war—they deprived other countries of the export dollars they needed to buy American goods.

After World War II, policymakers in Washington forged a powerful coalition of organizations in support of free trade. It included the Committee for a National Policy, representing large corporations and banks, and the main labor, farm and consumer organizations. Explaining the successful lobbying campaign in 1962 for the Kennedy administration's Trade Expansion Act, *Congressional Quarterly* remarked that the administration was "in closest touch with the Committee for a National Trade Policy ... but mutual help also flowed between the White House and the AFL-CIO, the American Farm Bureau Federation and the Chamber of Commerce." Quite a combination.

This coalition first found its main home among Democrats. In 1947, despite Republican objectives, the Truman administration joined the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade and in 1949 passed a trade liberalization bill. Labor and liberal Democrats such as Hubert Humphrey and the main liberal organization, Americans for Democratic Action, enthusiastically backed freer trade. Then Republicans, who had tried to retain quotas and tariffs, joined the Democrats. When Congress passed Kennedy's trade bill in 1962, Senate Democrats backed it by 56-1 and Republicans by 22-7. It seemed that a national consensus had been reached.

Over the next decade, however, the conditions that made the free trade coalition possible receded. As low U.S. tariffs helped spur the economies of Western Europe and Japan, American industry began losing market share to its rivals. The American textile industry had already suffered—South Carolina's Strom Thurmond, the voice of textiles, was the lone dissenting Democratic vote on the Kennedy bill. During the 1960s, American steel and automobiles also began to lose ground. By 1971, imports accounted for 18 percent of domestic steel sales, 24 percent of automobiles and 86 percent of radios.

American companies and their unions, once solidly in support of free trade, began to shift back toward favoring protection of specific industries and to reject free trade as a universal strategy, even though some CEOs still mouthed the rhetoric of free trade. Howard Samuel, a vice president of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers and later the head of the AFL-CIO's Industrial Union Department, stated the new rationale in a 1971 article in the *American Federationist*. The answer to America's trade problems, Samuel wrote, "is to apply to foreign trade the same degree of regulation and control that we take for granted in our domestic transactions." It was the archetypal statement of a new sensibility.

In 1970, the Nixon administration was unable to pass a new trade liberalization bill. Indeed, it would be another eighteen years before the country passed a major trade bill, and by then the sides in the debate had changed completely. Most Democrats, and the local businesses and labor unions they represented, now favored protection for endangered industries. In 1986, when Representative Richard Gephardt proposed an amendment that would have forced the government to retaliate against countries that consistently ran trade surpluses with the United States, Democrats backed the measure by 236-4.

Some Republicans also turned back to the protectionism of the 1920s. The "old right" U.S. Business and Industrial Council, which represents small- and medium-sized businesses, joined labor and the Democrats in backing protective trade legislation. So did steel-state Republicans like the late John Heinz and textile Republicans like Thurmond and Jesse Helms. In the vote over the Gephardt amendment, two of three South Carolina Republicans and all five North Carolina Republicans backed it.

Support for universal free trade was now limited in

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the elites to CEOs of multinational companies, Wall Street investment bankers, Washington's policy experts, lawyers and lobbyists for foreign governments and corporations, neoliberal Democrats and the Jack Kemp and Phil Gramm wings of the Republican party. The CEOs and bankers favored free trade because they thought their business depended on a seamless world capitalism. Multinationals had to worry about their imports into the United States as much as their exports from it. Some of the economists and laissez-faire Republicans clung to free trade the same way they had clung to protectionism in the '20s—identifying it axiomatically with prosperity. As NAFTA was negotiated, these advocates of free trade became its staunchest defenders, while the labor lobbyists and Democratic politicians who had formerly played prominent roles in the free trade coalition opposed it.

Beginning in the 1960s, the free trade coalition was also undermined by the growing propensity of American corporations to move their operations overseas. According to a Commerce Department study, imports to the United States from American corporations overseas rose by 130 percent between 1966 and 1970. The rise of offshore production alarmed labor unions and frayed the ties between the AFL-CIO and its corporate allies. In 1971 the AFL-CIO developed a bill, the Foreign Trade Investment Act—or "Burke-Hartke," after its two sponsors—that removed tax incentives for foreign investment and put controls on imports. The unions won the support of Ralph Nader's organizations, church groups and the new-left Institute for Policy Studies to oppose the unrestricted growth of multinationals.

ILLUSTRATION BY ROBERT GROSSMAN FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

American business reacted sharply—lobbying through the Emergency Committee for American Trade, founded by David Rockefeller as a successor to the Committee for a National Trade Policy. Policy experts from Brookings, the American Enterprise Institute and other think tanks joined the ECAT offensive. Some of them, like Gary Hufbauer, would play an important role two decades later in making the case for NAFTA. Business prevailed—Burke-Hartke never got out of the Ways and Means Committee—but the seeds of disunion had been planted.

American corporations continued to move their operations offshore. From 1967 to 1987, annual overseas investment had gone from $57 billion to $309 billion. Opposition to foreign investment continued to grow. Two decades later, virtually the same anti-free trade coalition against foreign investment—augmented by Perot's United We Stand and the U.S. Business and Industrial Council—would lead the fight in Washington against NAFTA's liberalized rules for American foreign investment. And this time the coalition was a much more formidable adversary for business and its think-tank allies.

As Congress was altering American trade priorities, the public perception of trade issues was also changing. Until the late 1980s, few Americans were familiar with trade debates. The man on the street did not know what MFN, GATT or the GSP was, but he or she also did not feel a pang of insecurity when America's trade policy was mentioned. In electing presidents, as opposed to House members, voters rarely considered their positions on trade. As a result, even as Congress's position was shifting away from free trade, the White House remained firmly in the hands of dedicated free traders.

That changed. The decline of American manufacturing and the end of the cold war focused national attention on economic concerns. The same anxiety that Americans had felt about the Soviet threat was now transferred to Japanese trade and investment, Mexican illegal immigration and footloose American corporations. These concerns, subsumed under the banner of economic nationalism, are transforming American politics.

The most dramatic change occurred during the Bush years. According to a 1989 CBS poll, 47 percent of Americans thought that the United States would be the No. 1 power in the twenty-first century; by 1991, only 25 percent thought so. A Gallup Survey in 1991 found that one-third of the public thought that the Soviet Union was a "threat" to the United States; 60 percent thought that Japan was a "critical threat" to the "vital interests of the U.S." By far the most respondents—65 percent—thought that protecting the jobs of American workers should be the first priority of American foreign policy; helping to spread democracy came in fifteenth.

In a new study of American opinion, *Economic Nationalism and the Future of American Politics*, Ruy Teixeira and Guy Molyneux argue that popular anxiety about American economic decline is feeding fears of foreign investment and low-wage imports and focusing Americans' attention on the link between jobs and trade. According to Teixeira and Molyneux, 67 percent of Americans favor "restricting foreign imports to protect American industry and American jobs," and 70 percent think foreign investment is "bad" for the United States.

The first politician to attempt to address the growing trade anxiety was former Nixon Secretary of the Treasury John Connally. In 1980 Connally ran a campaign for the Republican presidential nomination that

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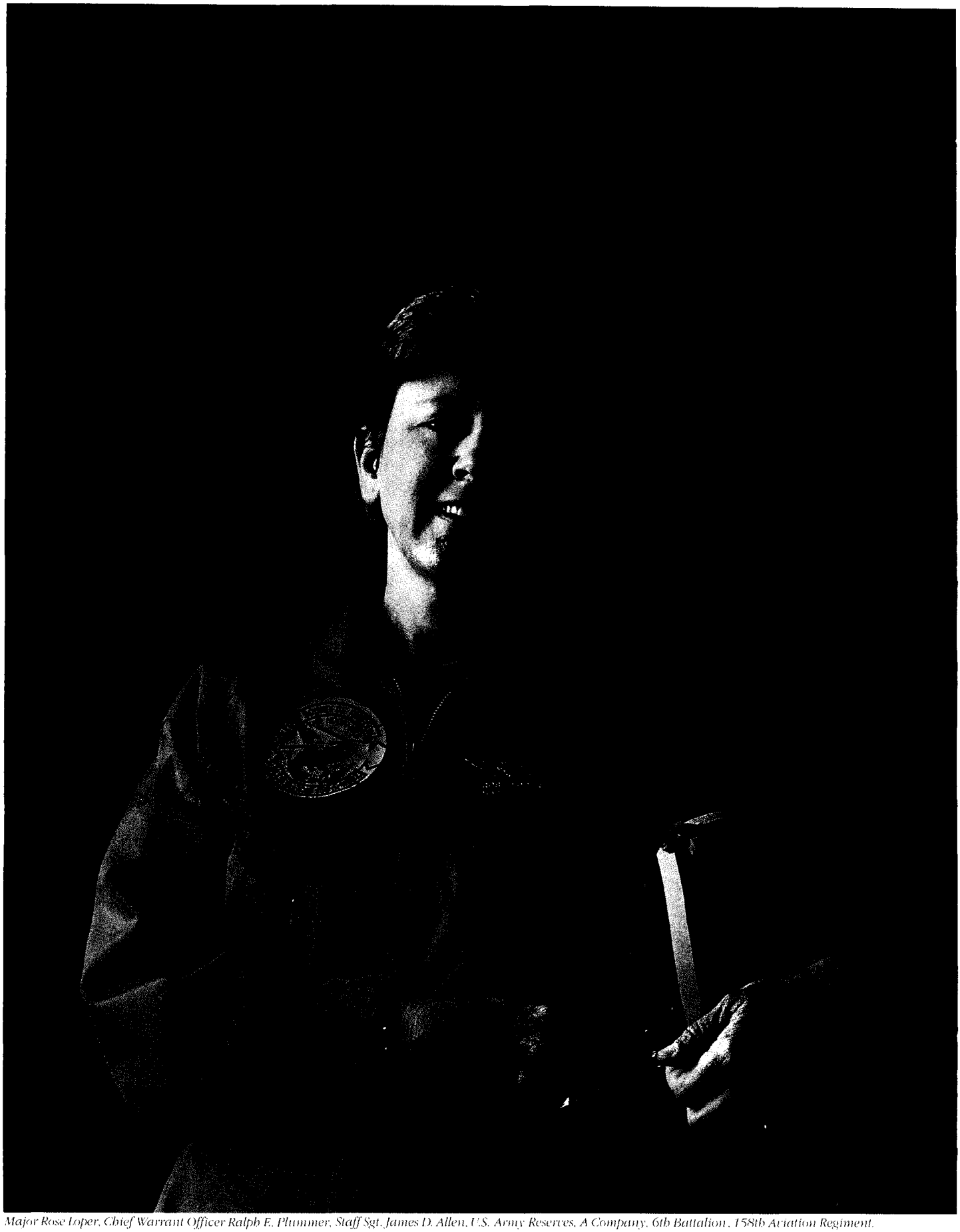

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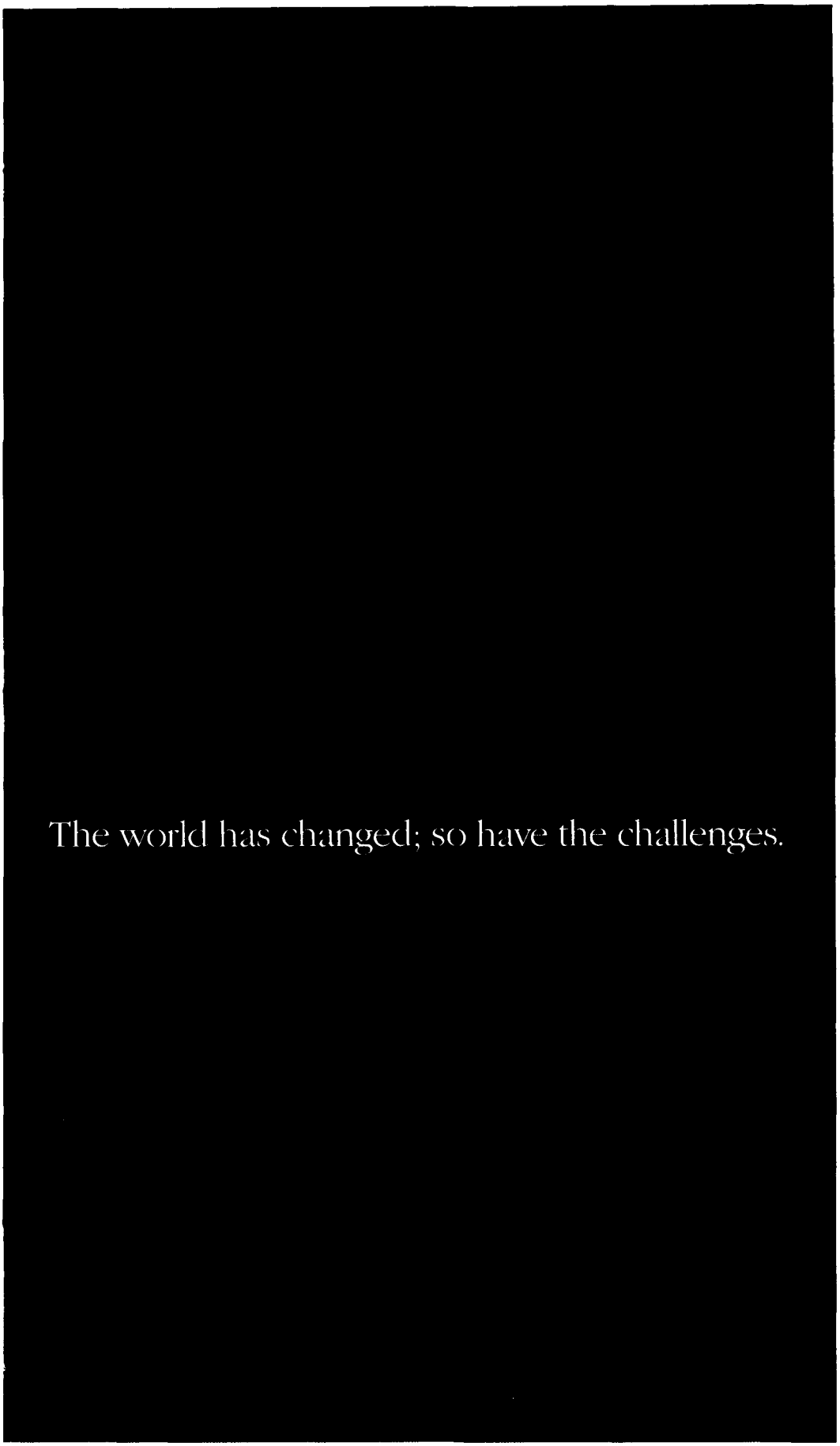

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Revenger's tragedy

The debate over NAFTA has already produced paradoxical alliances: Clinton and congressional Republicans; Democrats and Patrick Buchanan. Even more remarkable is the irony that Clinton might have had a better chance of pushing NAFTA through Congress if Congress had not killed Clinton's ambitious domestic program.

It might be much easier for Clinton to pass NAFTA if something like his original neoliberal program of investment-driven job creation, technology policy and worker retraining were already in place. The administration could say, "Yes, we're willing to sacrifice some jobs to low-wage Mexican competition, but displaced workers won't lose their health benefits, and they are certain to be retrained for better-paying jobs with higher benefits in certain high-growth, high-wage, high-skill 'sunrise' industries targeted by federal technology policy." Instead, the loss of well-paid industrial jobs, if it occurs, might take place without universal health coverage, without there being any serious retraining programs in place, without thoughtful, large-scale defense conversion policies and without there being any real technology policy beyond minor subsidies dating from the Bush and Reagan administrations.

During the campaign Clinton promised a $200 billion package of infrastructure, education, worker training and urban programs. As part of this, he called for an initial $30 billion stimulus package. By summer 1993 the actual stimulus program amounted to nothing more than $660 million, according to the *Wall Street Journal*'s estimate. Instead, Clinton fell back on an old Bush policy—using discretionary authority to accelerate spending on already existing programs. Clinton has also postponed the international "jobs summit," scheduled to discuss the job-creation crisis in all of the advanced industrial democracies, for a year or more.

When the European Community admitted Spain and Portugal in the 1980s it established "social cohesion" funds ($27 billion this year) even though the wage and productivity gap was much smaller. (Spain's per capita output was 40 percent of the E.C.'s average; by contrast, Mexico's per capita GNP was 13 percent of that of the United States.) Also, the European Investment Bank and Regional Development Fund invested heavily in the infrastructure of the poorer nations. These measures minimized wage-driven relocation of industry from north to south in Europe. Another example is German unification; to prevent mass immigration from the East and expatriation of industry from the West, the German government used an artificially low exchange rate for the East German mark as well as direct subsidies to East German citizens.

The administration, however, has proposed no new initiatives toward Mexico, other than minor environmental and labor agreements.

Even an ambitious retraining program might not work. No one really knows how to engage in successful retraining from sunset to sunrise industries. The German apprenticeship system is geared to well-defined tasks in traditional industries; it is unclear whether it can be adapted successfully to moving individuals—not once, but several times in their careers—from one entire industry to another.

In trying to sell NAFTA, the administration is now stressing the old "exports will create jobs" arguments traditionally used by Republican presidents as an alternative to the kinds of domestic measures Clinton promised to take if elected (investment in infrastructure, technology policy, worker training). The reason is simple—export-led growth is the *only* way Clinton can hope to create jobs, now that the Republicans and conservative Democrats have killed "Clintonomics" in the name of reducing the Reagan-Bush deficits. Call it Reagan's revenge.

In 1992 House Majority Leader Richard Gephardt, an opponent of NAFTA, proposed a 2 percent tax on cross-border trade to finance worker training and environmental protection. Instead, the administration trying to lure Gephardt back, proposes to revamp existing worker retraining programs and triple their funding to a mere $1.9 billion. However, there is no reason to believe that Clinton has the political capital to get such a measure passed (the Republicans have already had to swallow hard to accept Clinton's side agreements, and would certainly torpedo such an expensive program).

The administration is also relying on the conservative theory that lower deficits will (1) lower interest rates, which will (2) free capital for investment, which will (3) produce jobs (a process that can fail at any stage). These hopes may well be disappointed. Already the administration has been forced to scale back its estimates of 1993 GDP growth from 3.1 percent to 2 percent. The number of jobs created in the 28-month period from March 1991 to July 1993 was only 1.9 million—far below the average job creation of other postwar recoveries (5.3 million).

Since February, 239,000 jobs in manufacturing have been lost; 42,000 were lost in August alone. Among jobs that have been created in the recovery so far, a significant number—27.7 percent—have been part-time jobs created by temp agencies. Between 1991 and 1993, hourly wages of service-sector workers dropped by 0.3 percent, while hourly compensation of blue-collar workers dropped by 3 percent. What is more, this downturn hit white-collar workers and managers much more severely than did past recessions.

The greatest irony of the politics of NAFTA, then, is this: the prospects of NAFTA might be brighter if Clintonomics had not earlier been savaged by the Republicans and conservative Democrats. Clintonomics plus NAFTAnomics might have mingled present pleasure with present pain; NAFTAnomics minus Clintonomics promises only the certainty of present pain for key Democratic constituencies with the possibility of future pleasure for the population at large. If, despite Republican support, NAFTA goes down, its defeat will have been made easier by the sacrifice of the domestic revitalization program, Clinton's intended legacy, to Reagan's legacy, the deficit. Clinton's revenge?

MICHAEL LIND

Michael Lind is executive editor of *The National Interest.*

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A view from Washington

FROM FARMS TO PHONES TO FUELS: NAFTA MEANS NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL

At least 200,000 American jobs could be created by the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA)—but only if Congress passes it into law.

NAFTA could not only send lathes turning and computers churning, it could also get satellites spinning, brokers talking, vegetables moving, phones ringing and natural gas flowing.

The U.S. energy, telecommunications, agriculture and financial services industries—in addition to manufacturing—are among the many that could benefit from the expanded opportunities NAFTA would create. So could small business, high technology and professional services.

These opportunities are just a few of the reasons why Congress should pass the agreement this fall. With NAFTA on the books, the three nations of North America could enjoy the largest free-trade zone in the world—a market of more than 350 million people. U.S. business could be empowered to build and sell products made from the best goods and services America and its neighbors have to offer—but only if Congress passes the agreement.

NAFTA is designed to raise environmental standards at the same time it creates business opportunities. The agreement calls for the "upward harmonization" of environmental standards between the nations. The side-agreements call for improved enforcement of national environmental laws and the strengthening of international cooperation on environmental issues.

If enacted, the agreement could create opportunities in a long list of industries:

* NAFTA helps open portions of Mexico's state-controlled energy sector to competitive business practices and American energy service and supply companies. Natural gas exports to Mexico could quadruple by 1995.

* NAFTA requires Mexico and Canada to increase access to American professional services. Last year, American firms exported $8.9 billion of financial and other technology and professional services to Mexico.

* American semiconductor, computer and aerospace technologies will be eligible for tariff-free entry into Mexico under NAFTA.

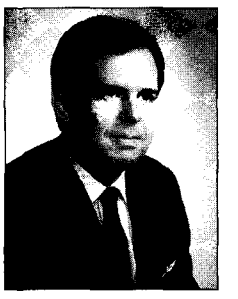
* NAFTA allows, for the first time, private and foreign ownership of independent electric generation plants in Mexico.

* America's bountiful harvest of agricultural products will be eligible for tariff-free entry into Mexico under NAFTA.

These sectors and many others would gain much under NAFTA, in part because Mexico's tariffs on imports from the United States average 10 percent, while U.S. tariffs on Mexican goods average just 4 percent. American businesses receive a greater benefit when these tariffs are reduced and eliminated.

Free trade represents the economic future not only of our continent, but also of our world. Barriers to trade are falling in every corner of the globe as nations realize the mutual benefits of open commerce.

NAFTA—negotiated by the administrations of both Presidents Bush and Clinton—will benefit Americans from all walks of life and in all areas of the country. On behalf of everyone who would like to fill the 200,000 new jobs the agreements stand to create in the American economy, Congress should pass NAFTA this fall.



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addressed American fears about the rise of Japan as an industrial power. But Americans were still more worried about the Soviet Union than about Japan and more worried about losing the Panama Canal than about losing market share. Connally's Fortune 500-style economic nationalism also lacked a populist dimension.

The real shift came in 1988. Gephardt, campaigning for the Democratic presidential election as a proponent of "fair trade," won the Iowa caucus. Unlike Connally, the Missourian responded directly to popular anxieties about jobs. Gephardt was defeated in New Hampshire (which was still booming), but his basic message was echoed in the 1990 congressional campaigns and in the 1992 presidential campaign. In 1992, Republican Patrick Buchanan, independent Perot and every Democrat evoked economic nationalist and populist themes—inveighing against foreign lobbyists and foreign trade barriers. Perot was the most effective of all, calling on Americans to make their country "king of the hill" again and to make "'made in the USA' a standard of excellence again." He blamed Wall Street and Washington for the country's decline.

Perot and the other candidates' criticisms of NAFTA crystallized popular fears of economic decline the same way that conservative attacks against the Panama Canal treaty crystallized fears of America's decline as a world power. They raised the specter of callous, overpaid CEOs closing down their operations in America to exploit Mexico's cheap labor; underpriced imports coming back across the border to drive small businesses into bankruptcy; and dark-skinned, illiterate peasants jumping border fences to swell the welfare rolls.

The NAFTA struggles are reminiscent of the canal debate for another reason: both exposed the gulf that separates Washington from the rest of the country. Within Washington, the pro-NAFTA lobbies and think tanks probably have the edge—with more money and status and the support of the major media—but anti-NAFTA forces have been more articulate and energetic. Outside Washington, the resurgent economic nationalism is creating a growing rumble against NAFTA. In a 1991 Gallup poll, taken just after negotiations began, 83 percent of those expressing an opinion favored a NAFTA similar to the U.S.-Canada agreement. By September 1992, Gallup found the public in opposition to NAFTA by 57 percent to 33 percent; by March 1993, 63 percent were opposed and only 31 percent were in favor.

The anti-NAFTA organizations are beginning to mobilize this public discomfort with the treaty. When Gephardt, wavering over whether to support NAFTA, returned to St. Louis on September 17, Perot volunteers presented him with 10,000 anti-NAFTA signatures from his district. (Gephardt finally came out against the agreement.) Another swing Democrat, Los Angeles Congressman Esteban Torres, returned home during the summer recess to find his district in an uproar over NAFTA and immigration. "It is boiling and seething and Perot is the Mixmaster," he said.

But there is an irony about this increasingly heated debate over NAFTA. While the treaty became the focal point of the battle over both free trade and the export of jobs, the actual facts of the treaty defy its characterization. NAFTA is like a new kid in town who suddenly and unwittingly becomes swept up in a fight between rival gangs.

First of all, NAFTA is not really about global free trade. It does remove trade and investment barriers among the United States, Canada and Mexico, but it retains and erects (in the form of "rules of origin") barriers between the three countries and the rest of the world. Appearances aside, NAFTA is a prudent step toward creating a regional trading bloc that would withstand the devolution of Western Europe and Asia into rival blocs. The treaty's free trade proponents would never admit this, but NAFTA's underlying thrust is toward managed trade and investment.

Second, the treaty will encourage American firms to relocate in Mexico, and that will cost jobs. But the treaty's liberal critics, who are beating the Burke-Hartke drums, won't acknowledge that investment in Mexico is not the same as investment in Thailand or Turkey. Mexico's economy is already interdependent with that of the United States, and in the long run, American prosperity will depend upon Mexico's revitalization. NAFTA may not be the best way to help Mexico—some critics argue for huge development loans—but it's the only way that the American public will remotely accept.

In the last year, several trade experts and economists, including Clyde Prestowitz of the Economic Strategy Institute, Richard Rothstein of the Economic Policy Institute, Jamie Galbraith of the University of Texas and a few politicians such as Gephardt, Torres and Bill Bradley have tried to introduce these kind of unsettling considerations into the polarized debate over NAFTA, but they have simply been ignored. Clinton himself made an effort to depolarize the debate by proposing new side agreements on labor, the environment and import surges. These agreements were meant to assure NAFTA's labor and environmental critics that the economic integration of the two countries would not be at the expense of jobs and clean air. But labor appeared indifferent to compromise, and business howled at any mention of it. Clinton did not handle the negotiations over the side agreements or with Congress particularly well, but even a modern Metternich might not have been able to get the feuding parties to stop fighting long enough to arrange a compromise.

In this, as in many other areas, Clinton is a victim of history. He is a pragmatist trying to operate in a deeply polarized political culture, riven by a decades-old argument over trade. As president, he could still contribute to a new American trade policy, but to do so, he will have to disentangle NAFTA from these deeper divides. The debate over NAFTA—like that over the Panama Canal Treaty—is plunging the nation into deep confusion disguised as passionate certainty, realigning parties and politicians, but along the lines of an inflamed factionalism, rather than a new, constructive order. If allowed to continue unabated, it could make an effective trade and investment strategy impossible. •

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WHOSE GOVERNMENT IS GORED?

By Paul Glastris

The most revealing vignette in the new report from Al Gore's National Performance Review is not, you'll be relieved to hear, about ashtrays. In 1985 the U.S. Forest Service began a pilot project to "reinvent" its operations in ways that typify the reforms Gore presents in "From Red Tape to Results." The Forest Service's aim was to give its "customers" better service by "empowering" lower level employees. Regional headquarters staff was cut and dozens of restrictive budget "line items" consolidated so that managers in the field could deploy resources where needed. Freed from excessive rules and regulations, field staff had discretion to solve problems on their own, but were also judged more squarely on their performance. The result: morale and productivity soared. For example, the time ranchers had to wait for permits to graze their herds on national forest pastures shrank from thirty days to a few hours because employees were allowed to make the decisions instead of processing the permits through headquarters.

Such organizational improvements will sound familiar to anyone even glancingly acquainted with the customer-friendly management strategies sweeping corporate America, especially the "Total Quality Management" movement. The Gore report's main thesis is that these strategies can be successfully applied, with modest adjustments, to federal agencies. The Forest Service's success seems like unqualified support for that thesis.

Except for one problem. Congress eventually forced the Forest Service to put back the restrictive budget line items, thereby eviscerating the reform experiment. "Congressmen view their jobs as deciding where the money goes," says Bill Delaney, the Forest Service branch chief who oversaw the pilot project. "I see no indication that they intend to change their roles." The Gore report doesn't deny what Congress did to the Forest Service experiment. Yet, faced with the massive and thorny problem of congressional micromanagement, the report offers the equivalent of David Stockman's magic asterisk: a recommendation (one of 800 in the report) that Congress "minimize the restrictions and earmarks it imposes on agencies." The ability to place specific earmarks into budget bills is one of the most treasured powers on Capitol Hill, and is a primary way lawmakers please constituents and interest groups. Merely asking them to "minimize" the practice is a little like asking an alcoholic to abstain. It can be done, but not without confronting the drinker, and the disease, head on.

The main problem with the Gore report is not that it is not bold enough but that it refuses to confront the consequences of its own boldness. It claims to be focused not on politics and policy-making but on the management of government, the side that traditionally has gotten the least high-level attention. Yet, if the Forest Service parable teaches anything, it is that any serious attempt to reform the delivery end of government programs leads right back to the political arena. If the White House tries to "empower" federal employees, it will only strengthen Congress's grip on those agencies, unless Congress can be forced or cajoled into disciplining itself. "The greatest mistake citizens can make when they complain of 'the bureaucracy,'" writes James Q. Wilson in *Bureaucracy*, "is to suppose that their frustrations arise simply out of management problems; they do not—they arise out of governance problems." With this report, the Clinton administration has declared war with Congress. But it has done so, quips Princeton political scientist John DiIulio, by "ringing the doorbell and running."

For a document written by a committee on deadline, the NPR report is remarkably coherent, ambitious and in many ways savvy about the inner workings of government. It is packed with useful recommendations that, if carried out, would go a long way toward achieving the report's twin missions: making the federal government "work better and cost less." A lot of those recommendations have to do with applying to government the same information and communication technologies that have transformed the private sector. The report talks of new IRS computer systems, for instance, that would calculate the tax burdens of non-itemizers, meaning 70 percent of all filers would be liberated from the annual nightmare of filling out tax forms.

These same technologies could also free bureaucrats from centralized government purchasing and personnel systems, which most experts agree are outdated and stultifying. Under the Gore plan, civil servants could buy supplies, from ashtrays to computers, directly from

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discount stores rather than rely on the slow-moving and often pricey General Services Administration, the government's central purchasing agency.

The report should also help allay fears that Bill Clinton is not committed to a "New Democratic" agenda: A central premise of the NPR is that government agencies and programs should be subjected to market forces and marketlike incentives. The Gore plan would let companies use private firms rather than OSHA inspectors to certify the safety of their workplaces, and it would give federal bureaucrats an incentive to economize by letting agencies keep half of all the money they don't spend by year's end. It's enough to make you wonder why the two previous Republican administrations didn't write this report. The answer, of course, is that it would have meant admitting that government is fixable, or at least worth trying hard to fix, an admission that undermines the modern conservative doctrine that "statism" is a lost cause.

Within the Gore team there was a struggle, which political scientist Donald Kettl of the University of Wisconsin describes as the "tastes great, less filling" debate. One side wanted to focus solely on improving government performance. The other preferred to use NPR to troll for budget cuts with which to appease congressional deficit hawks. The debate ended with a reasonable compromise. The team decided to avoid the Grace Commission's mistake of identifying as "waste" programs that commission members simply wanted to get rid of, such as subsidized rural electricity. The decision to make such cuts is a singularly political one, and while it would certainly shrink the deficit, it would do nothing to improve government performance. The NPR report offers only token cuts like these, among them eliminating highway "demonstration" projects and the infamous honey and mohair subsidies.

NPR staffers chose to find bigger money in agency "streamlining." Many of the recommendations along these lines are quite tame, such as refinancing certain HUD mortgages. But even those bound to be politically controversial, such as closing little-used agency field offices and boosting national park entry fees, can be defended as efforts to maintain current levels of government services at lower cost.

The one area almost everyone will watch as a litmus test of the administration's resolve is the report's recommendation that the federal work force be cut by 12 percent, or 252,000 positions. The NPR has targeted the right job categories for elimination: supervisors, budget auditors, personnel specialists and others who spend their days monitoring other federal employees. If history is any guide, however, cutting the work rolls won't guarantee budget savings. Since 1963, the federal work force has held relatively steady at between 2.5 million and 3 million. Meanwhile, real federal spending has risen tenfold. That's because since World War II, Washington has created few agencies like the Forest Service that deliver services directly to citizens. Rather, the big growth has been in "wholesale" government, in which Washington provides funds and legal authority to third parties (private contractors, nonprofits, state and local governments) who in turn deliver the services (handing out AFDC checks, cleaning up toxic waste dumps). This vast and longstanding trend seems to have eluded many conservatives, who keep calling for more privatization and federalism in order to stem the growth of Big Government.

The chief architect of the NPR, journalist and consultant David Osborne, is a big believer in wholesale government, which he describes as "steering rather than rowing." But it is worth noting that the greatest recent government catastrophes have all occurred in "steering" programs, including the S&L debacle, the HUD scandal and the Department of Energy's nuclear weapons plant cleanup mess. If anything, these programs suffered from not having enough federal employees monitoring them. The trick for the Clinton administration will be to pare the ranks without putting the federal treasury even more at risk.

"Cutting" government could improve performance, especially if it helps agencies refine their focus. The report locates the source of the problem on Capitol Hill, where the "complex politics of passing enabling legislation" loads programs with "multiple, often conflicting legislative objectives" that force those programs to be "all things to all people." Over the years, for instance, Congress has foisted onto the Agency for International Development more than forty different missions, from disposing of American farm surpluses to strengthening the American land grant college system. No wonder, says the report, that AID "has trouble accomplishing its real mission—promoting international development."

Having eloquently described the dilemma, however, the report fails to suggest a single mission that should be jettisoned from any agency. Instead, it offers another magic asterisk: a plea that Congress "demand less and clarify more." Being more specific would have meant telling powerful interest groups that, for the sake of bureaucratic efficiency and manageability, we're going to have to dump certain veterans preferences and minority set-asides and buy American provisions. The job of keeping excess missions from rendering programs unmanageable is the responsibility not just of Congress, but of the White House. Specifically, the Office of Management and Budget is supposed to make sure that drafts of legislation do not become monstrosities as they bounce around among congressional subcommittees, lobbying firms and executive branch agencies. Unfortunately, the staff on the "M" side of OMB that is responsible for overseeing this process (among other things) has shrunk from 224 employees in 1970 to forty-seven in 1990.

The NPR report does not address this key OMB responsibility. But it does load lots of new missions onto the agency, from culling unfunded state and local government mandates from federal regulations to reviewing

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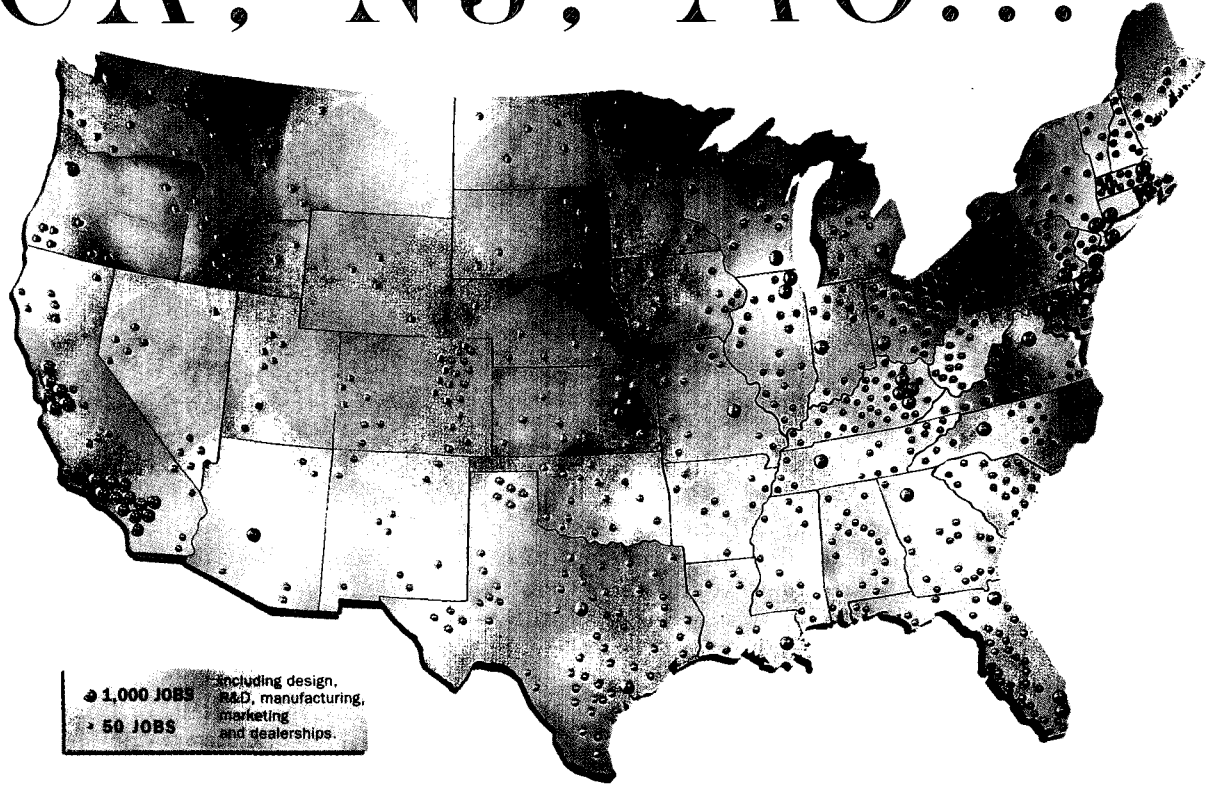

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government-wide "ecosystem management" plans. The good news is that we finally have a president interested in the management side of OMB. The bad news is that OMB will have to accomplish all this with virtually no new staff.

The "B" side of OMB is an entirely different story. The Gore report recommends that federal agencies be liberated from fiscal micromanagement, which the OMB under Reagan and Bush gleefully exploited in an effort to restrict the ability of agencies to spend money. A whole generation of agency managers and congressional staffers (some of whom now work for Gore) learned to hate OMB's heavy-handedness. The NPR wants agencies to be free to craft the specifics of their own budgets based only on broad White House parameters. It also vows to end the OMB practice of limiting the number of people agencies can hire, arguing that it overly restricts agency managers. The danger here is that by lifting such restrictions, the Gore team could weaken the White House's leverage over its own agencies. For instance, the report preaches the value of interagency cooperation in tackling problems such as job training and foreign trade promotion. Yet the turf battles that traditionally bog down interagency task forces have been overcome in the past only when OMB used its budget clout to enforce cooperation. Someone on the Gore team seems to understand this. Squeezed into the report are a few sentences bemoaning an interagency task force on federal R&D policy as lacking "teeth," because the White House cannot "tell agencies how to spend funds."

ILLUSTRATION BY ROBERT GROSSMAN FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

The White House would be at a further disadvantage if it unilaterally disarmed by stopping micromanagement of agencies and Congress didn't. "Pretty soon the Clinton people are going to learn that the permanent bureaucracy answers more to Congress and the interest groups than it does to them," warns Susan Tanaka, an OMB veteran now with the nonprofit Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget. NPR staffers insist that agencies won't be allowed to run amok because, in return for looser fiscal controls, OMB will hold agencies accountable with "performance measures." The idea is marvelous: try to get government to focus less on "inputs" (i.e., how an agency manager spends his money) and more on "outcomes" (i.e., whether the program accomplished its mission). But there are still more than a few bugs in the system. First, as Jon Meacham of *The Washington Monthly* points out, agency managers are notorious for devising deceptive numbers that make their programs seem spectacularly successful. OMB analysts will have to be very clever to see through the cons. Second, even when everyone is being honest there are problems, because "it is hard to measure the effect of a lot of what government does," observes Harry Hatry of the Urban Institute. Did auto thefts drop because of a new FBI crackdown or because Detroit introduced tougher door locks? And what about all that wholesale government? How do you measure the performance of a federal program that merely passes money on to a state program? In such gray areas there is plenty of room for self-justifying rationalization on the part of bureaucrats and labor unions and endless political debates on the Hill. Indeed, lawmakers had the Forest Service restore restrictive line items in its budget because they didn't trust performance measures on relatively concrete tasks such as issuing grazing permits and building logging trails.

Cynicism is cheap in Washington, especially when somebody throws a grand scheme for reform on the table. In almost every press account of the Gore report there is a line about ten previous presidential reports on government reorganization that have "gathered dust." Actually, some of those reports did lead to sweeping changes. William Howard Taft's Commission on Economy and Efficiency gave birth to the idea of a presidential budget, which allowed the White House to put its stamp on the spending process. The Brownlow committee called for the creation of the Executive Office of the President, which gave FDR the staff he needed to prosecute World War II. The 1950s are still remembered as the Golden Age of federal government competence, in no small part thanks to recommendations by the first Hoover Commission, which strengthened central management agencies such as the White House Bureau of the Budget. Note that each of these reports granted presidents more power. The NPR, by contrast, calls for pushing authority down to the agencies. That might give agency managers the freedom they will need to re-engineer their antiquated bureaucracies. Or it might simply give more clout for lobbyists and subcommittee chairmen. It all depends on whether lawmakers can discipline themselves. That's not impossible: consider the success of the military base closing commission. But it is unlikely to happen unless the president and vice president make it clear, to themselves and to the voters, that it's not just the management side of government that needs to be reinvented. It's the legislative side as well.

PAUL GLASTRIS is the midwest correspondent for *U.S. News and World Report.*

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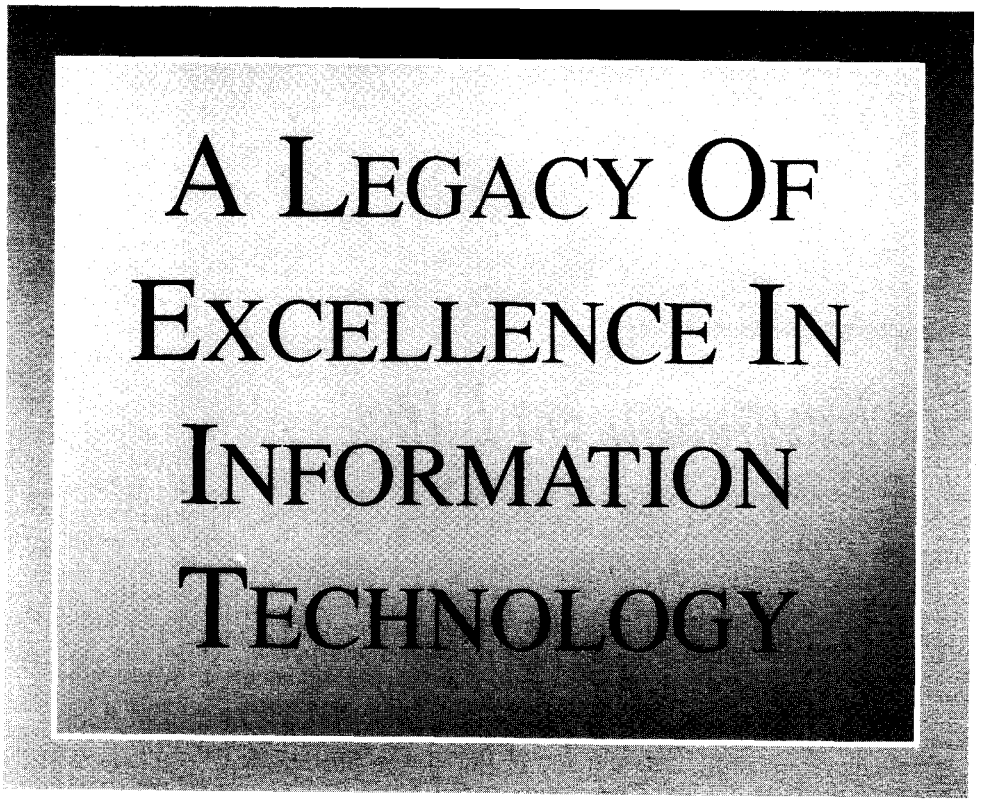

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BOOKS & The Arts

Stanley Kauffmann on Films

A Pilgrimage

In his later years Roberto Rossellini made films about Socrates, Pascal and Descartes that were interesting, in good part, because they were done with brave simplicity. When I heard that an English film was being made on Wittgenstein, I hoped for the same simplicity; then I heard that it was being directed by Derek Jarman, a master (or slave) of overwrought pictorialism, and I stopped hoping.

O me of little faith. Jarman's **Wittgenstein** (Zeitgeist) is not only unexpectedly reticent in style, it is beautiful. Not only is it not lush, it inhabits a magical spareness reminiscent of Alain Cavalier's *Thérèse* or passages in Syberberg. Almost all the scenes are staged (the operative word) against a black background: no more scenery and furniture are used than is absolutely required.

The effect, then, is like that of *Thérèse*—a pilgrimage, though this one couldn't be more different than the saint's: from Rothschild-rich beginnings in Vienna to Manchester and Cambridge, then to the Austrian army in World War One, then to Alpine-village schoolmastering, then to Cambridge again, with lots of troubles, then death at 62. Most of the episodes, though often treated more fancifully than veristically, are lighted to make them resemble Northern European painting—Memling, Cranach, that order of art. The atmosphere fits the subject.

The fine points continue. The screenplay was written by Jarman and Terry Eagleton, the Marxist literary critic and Oxford don who has written plays. (The producer was Tariq Ali, the same Tariq Ali previously known for political activism.) The screenplay draws most of its wit, perception and tacit eloquence from the writings and conversations of Wittgenstein himself, but they have been selected and deployed with further wit and perception.

I can confidently vouch for the authenticity of all that Wittgenstein says and does in this film because it has already been vouched for by a person who knows as much about Wittgenstein's life as anyone alive, Ray Monk, author of the excellent biography published three years ago. Monk reviewed the film in the *TLS* of March 19, 1993, and said:

> Wittgenstein once wrote that he could sum up his attitude to philosophical writing by saying that it ought to be written as if it were poetry. . . .The most one could expect from a film of Wittgenstein's life is that it does something to capture this poetic intensity. In fact, Derek Jarman's exceptionally fine piece of work does much more than that. It almost, in fact, achieves the impossible; it almost shows how philosophy can be dramatized.

The authenticity began with Jarman and Eagleton, and it is consummated by the actor of Wittgenstein, Karl Johnson. The facial resemblance is startlingly close, but at least as close is Johnson's persona, his tension, the sense of an interior strung with tight humming wires, an impatience with the universe that begins with himself. Not one profound utterance, not one flippant utterance, no fit of temper or of sullen iciness is actorish. Thus, in a way, the film takes on the quality of a surreal documentary.

This feeling is counterbalanced, or perhaps made stronger, by Jarman's imaginative touches. The boy Wittgenstein, about eleven or so, whom we meet at the start, recurs through the film as a kind of chorus, sometimes with a banner bearing the first line of the *Tractatus*: "The world is all that is the case." The appearances of Wittgenstein's family, first shown in ancient Roman dress possibly to indicate their imperial wealth, are treated in a distilled evocative manner—including those of his brother Paul, the pianist who lost his right arm in World War One. (Paul then commissioned appropriate works by Strauss, Prokofiev, Britten and Ravel. I once heard/saw him play Ravel's "Concerto for the Left Hand Alone" with the New York Philharmonic.) A Martian is extrapolated from *On Certainty* who converses occasionally with Wittgenstein.

Other notable figures in and around his life are treated dexterously. Tilda Swinton, the leading woman of *Orlando*, is almost unrecognizable here because of her vitality as Lady Ottoline Morrell. John Quentin is amused by humankind as the bisexual Maynard Keynes, and Lynn Seymour, the English ballerina, plays Keynes's ballerina wife, Lydia Lopokova, with samovar charm. Michael Gough is thoughtfully pleasant and vice versa as Bertrand Russell, but as Monk notes, he doesn't suggest the man's aristocratic provenance. Russell *was* an earl. (I once was squelched by Russell when I asked him a question after a lecture and

FILMS WORTH SEEING

Betty. *From France. Claude Chabrol cleverly concentrates again on character, this time a disintegrating woman who doesn't mind disintegrating. (Reviewed 9/13/93)* **Guelwaar.** *From Senegal. Ousmane Sembené, a quiet master, discloses religious and racial rifts through a near-farcical mishap with a corpse. (8/30/93)* **Manhattan Murder Mystery.** *From guess where. Woody Allen both parodies and imitates traditional comedy-mystery. Witty writing, blemished only by Allen's amateur acting. (10/4/93)* **Samba Traoré.** *From Burkina Faso. Idrissa Ouédraogo, another African master of simplicity, follows a villager who commits a big-city crime back to his village and dramatizes the result of this return. (10/4/93)* **—SK**

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can testify to his hauteur.) Johnny, the lover of both Keynes and Wittgenstein, is, as Monk notes, a composite character, well composed by Kevin Collins.

The boy who plays the young Ludwig is not only an inadequate actor, he is out of place. His puffy features could not possibly have evolved into the aquiline man's, and he has a cockney accent while Johnson uses a wondrously subtle Germanic accent. The casting of that boy is the one Jarmanesque intrusion in the film.

On the other hand, the arrant anachronisms are amusing. A barber 70 years ago has a Velcro band on the protective covering for customers. In World War One Wittgenstein uses an automatic rifle that wasn't invented until much later. These seem the sort of joke that Wittgenstein himself might have crinkled at, though on his deathbed he says he had no sense of humor.

Monk makes one slip. He lists some of the factors he considers well handled, then adds: "As for the question of Jewishness, Jarman ignores it altogether. In all this, he shows perfect taste." However, there is one brief scene of Wittgenstein standing before a background of many, many six-pointed stars. Seemed tasteful enough to me.

One of the integral ironies of this acute, intelligent, lovely film is that Wittgenstein most certainly would not have liked it. He liked Western and musical films; his favorite stars were Carmen Miranda and Betty Hutton. We see him several times at the movies with Johnny, more relaxed than at any other time. Films, the kinds that he liked, were apparently a deep means of escape for him, not from commonplace daily pressures but from the compulsion to think. Of Jarman's film, Monk says, "this, emphatically, would not have been his sort of thing."

The irony cuts deeper: Wittgenstein once contended that a good British film was an impossibility. Somehow this makes *Wittgenstein* even more Wittgensteinian. •

John Rawls and the Limits of Tolerance.

The Gatekeeper

By Stephen Holmes

I.

Spectacular achievement is a prison. Write what is immediately recognized as one of the major philosophical works of the century, and your life will never be the same again. Neither supporters nor detractors will allow you to turn peacefully to other themes. Such has been the fate of John Rawls, an unassuming philosopher at Harvard who has devoted the past two decades to coping with the aftermath of *A Theory of Justice.*

That dense and conceptually innovative treatise, which also expounded an abstract rationale for antipoverty programs and civil rights law, burst onto the intellectual scene in 1971. Its worldwide appeal continues to baffle some readers, especially those impatient with its unremittingly academic style, but Rawls's tome quickly established his reputation as America's foremost political philosopher. In the intervening years, Rawls has circulated and eventually published a series of painstakingly crafted "lectures," meant not merely to plug the gaps in his original presentation, but also to unfold his argument in new directions. He has always gone out of his way, with genuine modesty, to answer his innumerable critics, including free marketers, cultural conservatives, communitarians, utilitarians, perfectionists, socialists, feminists and others.

Political Liberalism
by John Rawls
(Columbia University Press, 401 pp., $29.95)

Already subject to hair-splitting commentaries in learned journals, these essays have now been reconfigured and woven together as *Political Liberalism.* Read together, they leave the impression that Rawls's initial stance has been somewhat altered, and not merely embellished with "a few missing pieces," as Rawls himself is eager to have us believe. There seems to have occurred a slighting of economic justice and the plight of the worst-off, which was central in *A Theory of Justice.* In its place appears a heightened concern for an unpunished diversity of ethical, and especially religious, views.

The question that most vexes Rawls now is: "How is a just and free society possible under conditions of deep doctrinal conflict with no prospect of resolution?" The equalization of resources, in short, has yielded center stage to the toleration of worldviews. To be sure, nothing in *A Theory of Justice* itself suggested that a just society had to enforce religious homogeneity or demand unanimity about moral ideals. So we probably should not talk loosely about a "new Rawls." And yet he is obviously more preoccupied here by relations between a secular democratic state and a religiously pluralistic society than by the problem of poverty. Rather than emphasizing the justice of controversial state interventions, such as redistributing resources from the rich to the poor, he now explains why the state should refrain from intervening or enforcing moral conformity on its citizens.

There is no contradiction between these two positions. Public redistributions of social and economic advantages can be cogently combined with laissez-faire in private morality. The state that regulates my property must not necessarily manage my conscience. And, indeed, this particular fusion of governmental activism in the one sphere and governmental restraint in the other sphere is the trademark of an influential tradition of liberalism. Still, the two impulses represent different facets of the liberal idea. Some disgruntled admirers, as a result, view these essays askance, and accuse Rawls of being a bad Rawlsian, even of having discarded his egalitarianism. Rawls rightly bridles at the charge, but he does admit some perplexity about his own intellectual itinerary: "I don't think I really know why I took the course I did."

However intellectual historians eventually unravel his case, Rawls's shift of focus does broach an important question. How should liberals conceive the relation between equality and toleration, between a single system of law coercively imposed on all citizens alike and the acceptance of moral pluralism? Classical liberalism was shaped by at least two battles, the one against aristocratic privilege and the other against religious persecution. As a consequence, classical liberals simultaneously affirmed uncompromisable principle (legal equality) and permissive laxity (every person being allowed to seek his own salvation in his own way). Rawls's own formula for this

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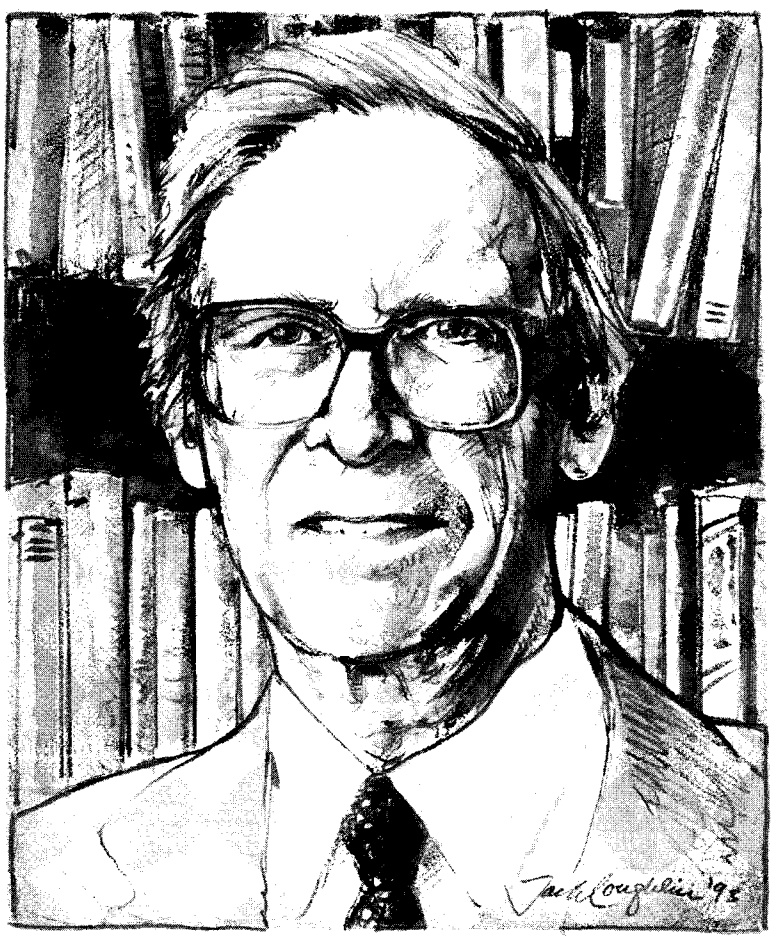
traditional mix of normative consensus and normative dissonance is more or less the following. The way the government should treat its citizens, and the way citizens should treat each other, is a question on which we all must more or less agree; but on the questions of how people should live, what personal ideals they should pursue and what loyalties they should honor, individuals, and not public authorities or democratic assemblies, must decide.

Rawls draws attention to this dualism with his well-known contrast between the right and the good, that is, between justice and other moral values. We may agree on the former, and disagree on the latter. Liberalism begins not with self-interest, as the schoolbooks intone, but rather with the right to be different constrained by a norm of fairness. To have pursued this subtle linkage of diversity and uniformity in such a meticulous fashion is a major achievement in itself, though the balance that Rawls strikes will not appeal to all.



DRAWING BY JACK COUGHLIN FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

The new book assumes a reader's familiarity with "the original position," the ingenious thought experiment that Rawls introduced in *A Theory of Justice* to help him make his case for a fair distribution of social resources. The original position is an imaginary choice situation where "rational individuals," psychologically unconstrained by ordinary moral inhibitions, are asked to design principles of justice governing the allocation of elementary social benefits and burdens. They must do their selecting, moreover, from behind a "veil of ignorance," that is, deprived of normally available information about their social status, their talents, their preferences and their ideas about what makes life worth living, including commitments to particular creeds and loyalties to exclusive groups. The veil of ignorance draws our attention to the crucial role of morality—including the ability to see the world from the vantage point of the persecuted and the underprivileged—in political deliberation.

Welfare programs, it suggests, should be justified by invoking a universalistic principle of impartiality, rather than by mobilizing particularistic sentiments of solidarity. And Rawls's conceit also dramatizes an important feature of the social-contract tradition, which is the way in which the norm of fairness dominates the principle of self-interest. Although it is in the rational interest of an individual to exempt himself from burdens designed to fall equally on all citizens, he cannot do this because such self-exemption would be palpably unfair. No one can find a reason for special treatment that others could not also invoke. This norm of fairness does not require heroic self-sacrifice, it requires merely an ordinary willingness to forego some tangible benefits in order to live according to rules that are publicly acceptable to one's fellow citizens. Most of us are perfectly capable of such modest self-restraint. Ordinary people can be motivated to act reasonably because they normally aspire to justify their behavior publicly by adducing reasons that others, too, will freely accept.

This is a powerful argument and, in large measure, a convincing one. Unlike the fictional characters in the original position, most of us do possess the moral capacity to act impartially some of the time, and therefore we are able, in favorable circumstances, to allocate social benefits and burdens without regard, say, to race, despite the enduring grip of racist bigotry. Citizens can learn to ignore traits such as skin color that are "arbitrary from a moral point of view." There is nothing unfamiliar or particularly unstable about such abstractions, despite what Rawls's detractors have sometimes claimed. Voting rights *can* be distributed without regard to race or ideology, not to mention intellectual achievement or moral character. This is a case of what might be called real abstraction. Judges, similarly, can successfully ignore "information about people's race and ethnic group, sex and gender," as well as their religion, political affiliation and economic class. The veil of ignorance is intuitively plausible, in short, because it mirrors the everyday practices of a liberal society in which justice is supposed to be, and often is, blind.

II.

Rawls's theory of distributive justice has been transposed from *A Theory of Justice* to *Political Liberalism* without being argued again in detail. First comes an equal allocation of basic liberties, including religious liberty, freedom of the press, legal protections for the accused and freedom of movement. (While he insists that these liberties are wholly "non-negotiable" and cannot be traded for lesser things such as economic justice, he also admits that they constantly clash with one another, and therefore "none of these liberties is absolute.") Second comes equal opportunity to compete for the benefits attached to coveted occupations and offices. And third comes the "difference principle," or the idea that economic inequalities are justifiable only if they work to "the greatest benefit of the least advantaged members of society." Although listed third, and not especially emphasized in the new book, this is the principle that remains the most interesting and hotly contested aspect of Rawls's theory of justice.

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Rawls's greatness resides in his ability to push simple moral precepts to disturbing logical conclusions. The difference principle is a perfect expression of this tendency; and it must be what he has in mind when he calls his position "an egalitarian form of liberalism." That is an understatement, incidentally, though his many leftist critics oddly still struggle to paint him as a great defender of inequality. The new book establishes that the difference principle does not belong to "the constitutional essentials." And yet it does belong among "the questions of basic justice" and, as such, is relocated to "the legislative stage" where it remains as politically obligatory as before.

What is at stake here? And why does Rawls cling unhesitatingly to this principle, even while placing it, so to speak, behind a column, in a corner, out of view? The difference principle, first of all, is much more stringent than the simple demand for a decent social minimum for the poor. It must be strictly distinguished from the classical liberal idea that differences in income or wealth between the rich and the poor are justified only if they are causally connected to an increase in overall productivity that is beneficial to the indigent. Rawls would not demur from this classical liberal notion. He, too, says that social resources must be "produced efficiently" if we are to have any hope of distributing them justly. Yet his theory is not meant to alleviate poverty simply by raising a bottom floor beneath which most disadvantaged people will not fall; it is much more radical.

A clue to Rawls's radicalism is the strange fact that the rational choosers in his original position attend exclusively to the suffering of the worst off. Those who hypothetically assume the point of view of the worst off reject a radically egalitarian solution *only* because it would worsen the poor's absolute standard of living. Rawls, in other words, favors an incredibly rigorous system in which no one above the level of the worst off can improve his own situation unless this improvement is causally related to an improvement in the condition of the worst off themselves.

He has always been noncommittal, admittedly, about the practical consequences of his theory, especially about the amount of redistribution that it requires. Social welfare policy invariably requires "a careful study of the circumstances," he now explains, and it cannot therefore be deduced from a theory of justice alone. Still, the difference principle will continue to raise yelps of protest because it seems to dictate a system of distribution that consults exclusively the interests of the least advantaged members of society. Those who lose by redistribution are seldom mentioned. They are presumed to make all the necessary sacrifices without a squawk, simply because they can put themselves imaginatively into the shoes of those who gain by "just transfers" of primary goods. ("Primary goods" is the Rawlsian term for what should be distributed—not welfare itself, but the conditions for the pursuit of welfare.)

This way of thinking is lucid and arresting, but it is not altogether plausible. Why should small gains by the worst-off members of society justify large losses by everyone else, including the next-to-worst-off? While marginalizing somewhat the subject of distributive justice, *Political Liberalism* explicitly endorses Rawls's earlier radical position, and so it will continue to raise such doubts. But it also makes one wonder why Rawls needs the difference principle at all. Like many other liberals, he explicitly advocates "a social minimum providing for the basic needs of all citizens," a bottom floor designed, among other things, to guarantee that the seemingly equal distribution of basic liberties does not remain a sham. And he independently endorses some sort of cap on accumulated wealth, or at least severe controls on its use in

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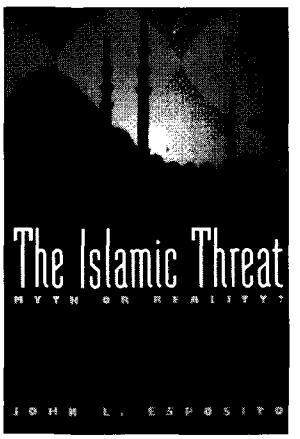

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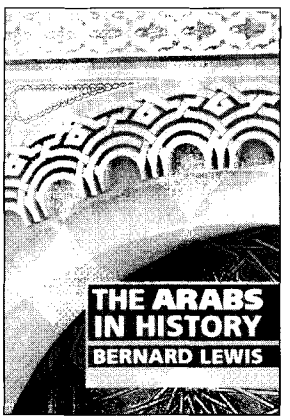

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electoral campaigns, in order to prevent the rich from exerting unfair political influence. If he can eliminate poverty and dependency on other grounds, why does he thirst after more economic equality?

The answer is that Rawls denies that eliminating poverty and dependency is the sole important liberal aim. Liberalism, as he never forgets, also promises to create "a fair equality of opportunity." *A Theory of Justice* is such a gripping work not least because it does what few liberal writings dare to do: it takes seriously the idea of meritocracy. Privileges should be distributed meritocratically, Rawls reasons, but only so long as the competition is truly fair. Yet highly varied circumstances in childhood have created unequal capabilities to exploit equal opportunities; unequal family upbringing, which is simultaneously unmerited and unavoidable, guarantees an unfair distribution of the ability, and even the inclination, to take advantage of formally equal chances.

Rawls draws our attention to this unhappy situation to undermine the conservative idea of "the deserving poor." But what should be done to overcome such deeply rooted injustices? The family's role in reproducing inequalities notwithstanding, it cannot be abolished, for obvious reasons. Ordinary liberals, despite their slogans, aim not at an unattainable equality of opportunity, therefore, but at a modest compensation for unmerited inequalities of preparation. They advocate publicly financed education, child nutrition schemes and other transfer programs aimed at providing some sort of social minimum even for the most neglected children.

Rawls would support such palliatives, but again he refuses to stop here. He remains unwilling to abandon a more ambitious ideal of creating equality of opportunity, rather than compensating for inequalities that unfortunately cannot be overcome. This uncompromising adherence to a precept that is usually honored only in the breach is what makes him a radical among liberals. And his chronic vagueness about the mechanics and the quantities of desirable redistribution does not detract from the moral resonance of Rawls's point, however politically implausible it may appear.

But the Rawlsian saga of redistribution does not end there. His new book unexpectedly combines this argument with its opposite. Alongside strong claims about unequal upbringing and the redistributions it implies, we now find the observation that people are "responsible" for their characters and desires, whatever disadvantages their social upbringing heaped upon them, and that "those who surf all day off Malibu must find a way to support themselves and would not be entitled to public funds." Despite the flipness of the example, borrowed from a colleague, this sort of remark suggests strongly that Rawls wants to make the poor responsible for their own behavior. This is admirable, but is it consistent? Surely the notion of individual responsibility cannot be smoothly combined with a strong theory of social determinism designed to exculpate the indigent from the insinuation that they deserve their sorry fate.

In *A Theory of Justice*, Rawls also argued that no one deserves his "genetic assets." Perhaps he meant primarily skin color, but the appellation also includes artistic, intellectual and athletic talents (and even the proclivity to make an effort). Those inborn traits, too, are wholly undeserved. They, too, are "arbitrary from a moral point of view." Taken to such an unprecedented extreme, then, the idea of "deserving" undermines itself. From such a perspective, no distribution according to genetic assets, not high salaries for brilliant athletes or musicians, not large rewards for extraordinary effort or achievement, could conceivably be meritocratic. (We can reward such talented people for the sake of efficiency, to increase the social surplus, but not because they deserve it.)

Such an argument is imminently logical, but it is also impossible to accept in practice, not least because such determinism is incompatible with human dignity and individual self-respect. It added a splash of color to Rawls's philosophy; but it has disappeared from *Political Liberalism*. Rawls does discuss a related problem, though: he is now quick to admit that the handicapped might be ill-served by a strictly equal distribution of primary goods. In such cases, just distributions should be fixed by less mechanical and more ad hoc methods. At one point, however, Rawls seems to pull back from such a generous position. He explicitly claims that "the effects of illness and accident on natural abilities" should not be considered unfair, and do not present good grounds for redistribution. They are apparently a matter of misfortune, not injustice.

This observation may not be quite as parenthetical as it appears in Rawls's discussion, since his whole theory is constructed so that it does not apply to the disabled and the severely ill. They are "put aside for the time being." The only people taken into consideration, so far as the theory is concerned, are those who possess "the capacity to be normal and fully cooperating members of society over a complete life." Why? This provisional neglect of the nonproductive members of society is the result of Rawls's decision to conceive of the principles of justice as the fair terms of social cooperation.

Rawlsian justice is based on "an idea of reciprocity and mutuality." That is, "all who cooperate must benefit, or share in common burdens, in some appropriate fashion." Those who participate in the fair system of social cooperation "can reasonably expect to acquire [primary goods] in return for what they can reasonably expect to contribute." Those who do not cooperate, we are invited to infer, do not deserve any such benefits, any due recompense for efforts made. This systematic and self-conscious neglect of the non-cooperator is also reflected in Rawls's definition of social union as a "comprehensive good to which everyone can contribute and in which each can participate." Such a bias toward contributors may produce a leaner theory, but it certainly leaves one skeptical about Rawls's protest that he does not conceive of justice as a form of "mutual advantage." To build such an emphasis on social cooperation into the very foundations of the theory, as Brian Barry has sensibly pointed out, is to transform justice-as-fairness into a form of just exchange rather than a form of impartiality.

Which brings us to Rawls's wonderful strictures on "communitarian" thinking. Communitarianism, from his viewpoint, is based on a traditional and unacceptable subordination of the individual to the group. For those who value their group above all else, for example, a woman who has children is more valuable than a childless woman because the former has made a greater contribution to the reproduction of the community. Liberalism, by contrast, is individualist, in the sense that it detaches the worth of individuals from any contribution that they may or may not make to common aims. Rawls clearly states that we cannot assign some people more or better basic rights and privileges than others on the grounds that the former do more to achieve purported community goals than do the latter. This is an inspiring defense of liberal individualism. Unfortunately, it is also the beginning of a contradiction in Rawls's thought. For how do such strictures against communitarianism comport with a definition of justice as a fair return on social cooperation? Not comfortably, to say the least.

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III.

What about "the new Rawls," and his discussion of religious pluralism in a secular democracy? The most popular criticism of the myth of the social contract has always been that no real society was ever created by a voluntary agreement between "atomistic" individuals. To meet the charge that liberals are chronically unaware of the power exerted by groups over individuals, Rawls now replies with sovereign simplicity that liberalism was "born out of the cruelties of religious civil wars." In other words, the starting point for liberals is not the atomistic individual, it is a society in which the iron control exercised by group norms over individual belief and behavior is too obvious to be mentioned.

If we see egoism and materialism as the main afflictions of social life, admittedly, then selflessness and idealism appear as attractive cures. In a society torn by fundamentalism and xenophobia, however, selflessness and idealism are part of the problem, not part of the solution. Since "the most intractable struggles" are "for the sake of the highest things," liberals work to establish a system in which ultimate values cannot be enforced by political means. And to foster this end, Rawls rearticulates the classical liberal distinction between man and citizen, or between the public and nonpublic realms. We can agree about public values and agree to disagree about nonpublic ones, he explains. The importance of a public value—say, equality before the law—is in no way diminished by our recognition that it does not lend meaning, warmth or flavor to existence.

The dichotomy between the public and the nonpublic is a practical solution of the problem of doctrinal conflict, because it is much easier to agree, for example, that religion should be a private matter than to agree about which religion is true. Again, there is nothing utopian about such an arrangement, as many homely examples prove. People of different religions can play chess or basketball together; and as long as all players accept identical rules and submit to the same umpire, diverse backgrounds need not subvert a cooperative venture. Generalizing from this familiar pattern, Rawls concludes that social stability does not always depend on doctrinal homogeneity. If a society is complex enough, it can achieve stability by securing a narrowly focused unanimity on the basic groundrules of social life, while admitting a wide diversity of views on all other moral questions. Political stability can be reached without moral agreement across the board by narrowing the range of issues

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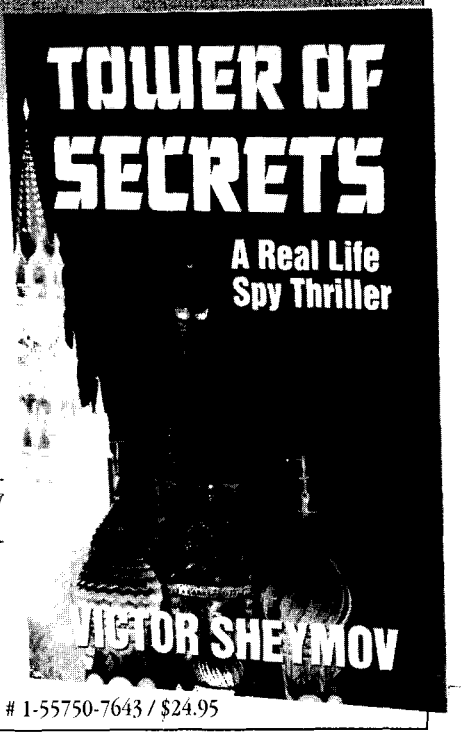

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that is subject to political regulation and social control. This, too, is a powerful and largely persuasive argument.

What really is new in *Political Liberalism* stems from Rawls's attempt to work out the consequences of this idea. Moral attachments and loyalties may be inexpressibly precious in private life, but no liberal society can be held together by a single "comprehensive religious, philosophical or moral doctrine." A plurality of conceptions of the good is a rude fact of modern experience. Dreams of lost moral unanimity are fashionable because soft-minded theorists do not ask the pertinent question: When should political coercion be used to punish heretics and enforce conformity? Rawls recognizes that "political power is always coercive power." He does not worry primarily about which system will produce the most beautiful citizens; he worries, rather, about the occasions when the use of coercion by political officials is justified. And he concludes that it is wrong to use state power, which belongs equally to all citizens, to enforce upon everyone a view about which reasonable people are bound to differ uncompromisingly.

This ideal of toleration can be clarified by invoking "the veil of ignorance." The rational but amoral choosers in "the original position" are unaware of their own position in society, but they are also unaware of the positions to be occupied by people whom they love and whose ideals they share. Impartiality means that they cannot earmark positions of privilege for kith-and-kin, ideological soulmates or coreligionists. This is humanly possible because people *can* detach themselves from their particular group's moral goals—not completely, of course, but enough to refrain from using coercion to enforce conformity to sectarian aims. Liberal toleration is workable because citizens can agree that coexistence and cooperation among rival sects are more valuable than the kind of religious homogeneity that could realistically be achieved by the use of force. They can agree on the rules of cooperation (the right or the reasonable) and disagree about personal morality (the good or the rational).

There is nothing psychologically strange about this doubleness. Consider secular humanism. Some liberals believe that religions are simply false, but they do not, merely because their views on this question are deep and firm, advocate the use of political power to close down churches, mosques and synagogues. They are not skeptics, since they believe that their own ideas about religion are true, but neither are they Stalinists. Rawls christens this kind of self-restraint "the duty of civility," and he makes it into a central virtue of liberal politics. His underlying assumption, expressed in a striking phrase, is that "politics in a democratic society can never be guided by what we see as the whole truth."

And yet serious questions remain. For one thing, are not secular humanists, whose emotional attachment to "the whole truth" may be pretty faint, more likely than religious believers to accept such a dispensation? Rawls hopes not. Indeed, the main objective of his new theory is to avoid a traditional liberal bias toward the views and the values of secular intellectuals. Kant and Mill praise individualism, moral autonomy and the ceaseless questioning of all inherited traditions, which is fine for some people; but to make all-questioning liberalism into a public philosophy is to disparage people who do not happen to hold a consolationless creed.

How can a state be liberal and still avoid insulting its citizens who are religious? It can do so, if it is based on "liberalism as a political conception" rather than on "liberalism as a comprehensive view." Kant and Mill advocated the latter; they favored a liberal ideal meant to govern all of human life, which is why they ended up, intentionally or unintentionally, publicly belittling sincere churchgoers. Rawls opts for the former, which (he hopes) will allow him to avoid the bias toward secular humanism that is dominant within the liberal tradition. For a Rawlsian or "political" liberal, there is nothing scandalous or improper about heteronomy and dogmatism in private spiritual questions. "Many persons may not examine their acquired beliefs and ends but take them on faith, or be satisfied that they are matters of custom and tradition"; and such people "are not to be criticized for this."

At one point Rawls even advocates honoring "the claims of those who wish to withdraw from the modern world in accordance with the injunctions of their religion." In pursuit of civility, political liberalism "tries to avoid opposing any comprehensive doctrine," including those radically out of whack with a predominantly secular society. Such forbearance sounds peaceful and conciliatory, but it necessarily involves slapping down those liberals who would make secularism the rule in all of life. At times, Rawls's toleration, his welcoming attitude toward nonsecular comprehensive views, even suggests toleration for fundamentalists. This is what makes his new argument piquant, and justifies the strong contrast he draws between his own liberalism and the liberalisms of Kant and Mill.

But he cannot really go this far, by the terms of his own thinking, and he knows it. He wants to tolerate a wide range of religious and moral views, but only so long as they all remain within the bounds of "reasonableness." The "principles of justice set limits to permissible ways of life." Religious and moral aims must "fall within the range permitted by the public conception of justice." Now these are admirably clear formulations. For one thing, they show how liberals can make sense of the idea of toleration even while they retain a firm grasp on what remains intolerable. But they also show that equality of opportunity for all religions, no matter how obstreperous or socially disruptive, is definitely not what Rawls has in mind: "it is neither possible nor just to allow all conceptions of the good to be pursued" for "some involve the violation of basic rights and liberties." Obvious candidates for public discouragement, if not coercive repression, would be a religious sect that advocated civil disabilities in case of apostasy and an ideological group, religious or secular, that openly favored "the repression or degradation of certain persons on, say, racial, or ethnic, or perfectionist grounds."

So there are limits even to Rawlsian toleration, and we must wonder how open and pluralistic his ideal society would turn out to be. How big, really, is Rawls's tent? His claim that liberal legal arrangements can honestly aim to be nondiscriminating even if in practice they always favor some groups and creeds is subtle and, to me, convincing. But it does not answer the central questions. How many moral and religious views will Rawlsian liberalism tolerate? And how illiberal may they be? Can he really confine secularism to the political sphere? Isn't there something futile about trying to distinguish between reasonable and unreasonable religious views? And what sort of religions will pass this test?

Few will object when Rawls excludes from his well-ordered society "doctrines that are not only irrational but mad and aggressive." But objections are sure to be raised when Rawls suggests that anyone who votes against first-trimester abortion on theological grounds is behaving unreasonably. Is this a reasonable use of the concept of reasonableness? Might it not be simpler to interdict harmful behavior rather than behavior that is cognitively deficient by some objective measure? Rawls's reliance on the criterion of reasonableness appears especially questionable when he implies that he might legally disfavor or marginalize from polit-

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ical debate religious views whose adherents are not Popperian enough to admit that their own deepest beliefs "may be mistaken," who do not listen open-mindedly to atheists and who do not try to gain a public hearing by invoking secular values that they believe all others, including religious rivals, will accept.

Rawls's lofty refusal to dwell on concrete social problems impedes our understanding of exactly what he has in mind. He does reluctantly confess that a Rawlsian regime will have to be quite intolerant in certain cases, to prevent groups that espouse impermissible views from doing too much damage. If members of a fundamentalist sect claim that they must use violence to achieve their God-assigned aims, political authorities must not only prevent them from doing this, but must also insult them (before their own children, presumably) by telling them that their religion is false, that God did not speak to them yesterday and so on. Similarly, a liberal state may "bend" religions in a liberal direction, "shaping them if need be from unreasonable to reasonable."

IV.

One problem with "political liberalism," then, is its disinclination to extend a liberal theory of justice beyond the political sphere narrowly conceived. Rawls's theory of justice does not apply to "the whole of life," but is rather restricted to "a special domain, the political." But what is the political domain? Where does it begin and where does it end? And what does it exclude? Not even the most careful reader of *Political Liberalism* will come away with a high-resolution picture of the boundaries between the political and the nonpolitical. Churches fall into the nonpolitical category, at least some of the time, and for certain purposes. Companies, hospitals and universities, as well as professional groups and labor unions, are sometimes included and sometimes excluded. The location of the family, that great playground and battlefield of personal intimacy, is equally uncertain.

And what does "nonpolitical" mean, anyway? The term is intrinsically obscure, because politically designed arrangements penetrate almost every aspect of social life. Indeed, "the government's authority cannot be evaded except by leaving the territory over which it governs." Force and fraud, wherever they occur, usually justify coercive intervention by the agents of the state. Divorce law and inheritance law show how the family in particular is dependent on political regulation. Rawls's ideal polity, moreover, would aim

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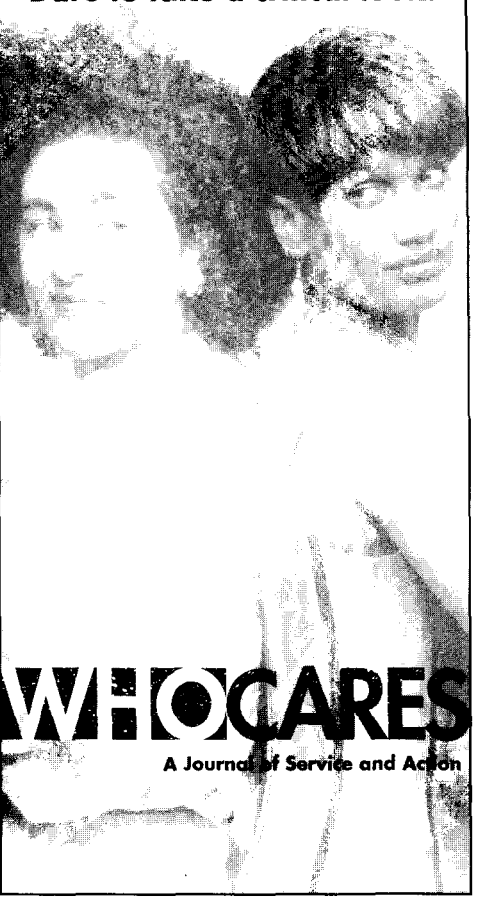

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at eliminating both racial degradation and sex discrimination, equalizing the social bases for self-respect and even enabling citizens "to become full persons." How could such a state possibly avoid extensive monitoring and regulation of extrapolitical interactions? Perhaps because his philosophical resourcefulness is not matched by a knack for sociology, Rawls casts scant light on the distinctions, between state and society, between public and nonpublic, on which he relies.

Sometimes Rawls claims that his theory is "political" in the sense that it is practical. Though he sometimes says that philosophers cannot hope to solve social problems, he also says that "political philosophy does not, as some have thought, withdraw from society and the world." Far from being academically aloof, political philosophy has a burning mission. It must solve real social problems. It must help, for example, to secure the conditions for fruitful coexistence among rival religious denominations. Spurred into existence by the painful breakdown of "our shared political understandings," moreover, political philosophy yearns to reestablish a lost consensus. His liberalism is "political," therefore, because it works to fill this gap by creating unanimity about justice. The whole point of elaborating a theory of justice "is to see whether we can resolve the impasse in our recent political history."

And yet Rawls is not really making a sociologically concrete argument, or recommending his political ideal on the grounds that it is workable or likely to survive. A just society, in Rawls's sense, has never existed, while unjust ones have lasted for centuries. When he recommends his principles of justice for their "stability," therefore, he has something non-empirical in mind. When he argues for what he calls an "overlapping consensus"—"political liberalism looks for a political conception of justice that we hope can gain the support of an overlapping consensus of reasonable religious, philosophical and moral doctrines in a society regulated by it"—he makes it clear that support from those who hold unreasonable doctrines has no interest for him. Similarly, "we leave aside comprehensive doctrines that now exist, or that have existed, or that might exist." Rawls has not designed his doctrine with an eye to gaining maximum consensus, given the moral beliefs of his contemporaries, for this would smack of "compromise," a word that he uses pejoratively. He wants only the backing of views that have been pre-screened for compatibility with his conception of justice. He wants "to arrange our common political life on terms that others cannot reasonably reject." The operative term here is "reasonably": if the majority rejects his principles unreasonably, that is their problem, not his.

For principles of justice are not like rules of traffic. Justice is a shared aim and a mutual duty of liberal citizens. It is a part of morality, or more precisely, it is that part of morality which may be coercively enforced. How will those who hold rival conceptions of the good think about their shared conception of the right? They will see it as a moral duty, Rawls asserts, and will embrace it from within their own positions. The religious and the secular can accept Rawlsian principles, the former for religious reasons, the latter for secular reasons. Some citizens will view Rawls's principles of justice as "derived from" their comprehensive doctrines of the good life, while others will see them merely as "congruent with, or at least not in conflict with, their other values."

Is this portrait of society not a portrait of American society? It is impossible to escape the impression that Rawls is generalizing from American experience. How many polities are there in the real world that can satisfy the Rawlsian ideal of a secular democratic state that provides a peaceful and unifying framework for a multidenominational and multiethnic society? In *Political Liberalism*, Rawls frequently writes as if he has "worked up" his political conception of justice from "certain fundamental intuitive ideas" latent in the political culture of his own society. It is important to him that "within our tradition there has been a consensus that the discussion of general political, religious and philosophical doctrines can never be censored." He is impressed by "the fundamental idea of equality as found in the public political culture of a democratic society." And in Rawls's preferred public culture, "there is no such thing as the crime of seditious libel; there are no prior restraints on freedom of the press; the advocacy of revolutionary and subversive doctrines is fully protected." Sounds familiar.

It is undeniable that Rawls's principles of justice are premised on the suitability of particular social and economic conditions. The difference principle, certainly, is designed to fit an affluent society blessed with a considerable social surplus; and the theory of toleration would obviously be inappropriate to a religiously homogeneous society. When Rawls says that "for us the priority of basic liberties is required," he implies that it is not required for people who live in other social conditions, with a lower level of economic advancement and fewer acquired skills in running institutions. All this implies, unmistakably, that Rawlsian liberalism is not made for export, at least not to most countries in the world.

Rawls's flirtation with tradition-based moral theory has scandalized some Rawlsians, who cleave to the universalistic vocation of philosophy. How can a Kantian be a cultural relativist, or a patriot? Has Rawls truly turned from cosmopolitanism to particularism? Is his liberalism founded, after all, on communitarian foundations? Why turn a nation's culture into the standard of justice? Do all democratic states have the same traditions? And what is "our" tradition, anyway? The latter is an especially pressing question, since Rawls insists that our society is culturally heterogeneous, marked by many "distinctive traditions and ways of life."

If Rawls seems tempted by the role of interpreter of shared meanings, however, he shrinks back from anything like volkisch thought. He generalizes from American experience, but he does not quite idealize it. Thus he often treats the "common fund" of American beliefs as an obstacle to be overcome rather than an authority to be followed. He never really holds a mirror up to his culture. When he writes that "justice as fairness starts from within a certain political tradition," it is the Kantian tradition he has in mind, or the social-contract tradition, or the "tradition of democratic thought."

V.

Rawlsian reasonableness can neither erase moral conflict nor arbitrate conclusively among ultimate values. When left mentally free, reasonable people will necessarily disagree about the good. This is owed to what Rawls calls, in his new book, "the burdens of judgment," that is, the limits of human reason, which include the complexity and the inconsistency of relevant evidence; the essentially controversial nature of the kinds and the weights of pertinent considerations; the vagueness of the concepts that we use; the way that total life experiences differ among individuals and color value judgments; and, of course, the existence of good arguments on both sides.

But why won't free and reasonable people also disagree about the right? Rawls believes or hopes that "the correct principle of justice" will be "shared by everyone." Why? Surely disagreements about the right will be especially likely if a substantive conception of justice, rather than a merely procedural one, is at stake. As a "constructivist," Rawls asserts that

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the idea of justice is a human invention, and not the discovery of a higher law inscribed in nature or handed down by a wise deity. But if justice is made, not found, then it is likely to be made in different ways by different people. And isn't disagreement about justice as much "a permanent feature of the public culture of democracy" as is disagreement about religious truths and personal ideals?

Rawls cannot deny that different people in the same culture can hold conflicting concepts of justice, for he allows that "there are many variant liberalisms," that "the public political culture may be of two minds at a very deep level" and even that his own conception of justice is "deeply controversial." Such disagreement is wholly normal, he admits. He also acknowledges, almost wearily, that "we cannot expect too much of a philosophical view," and more explicitly, that "public reason does not ask us to accept the very same principles of justice." But these disclaimers, though they are sprinkled generously throughout the text, are not representative. The tenor of Rawls's argument suggests that unanimity about justice, or "a shared point of view," or "common ground on which public discussion of fundamental questions can proceed," is the attainable aim of all his labors. He wants "principles that all can accept."

But of what practical benefit would such principles, and such common ground, be? And what are the consequences if we fail to achieve them? Consider again the abortion debate, in which both sides have politicized "the point of view of personal morality" and thereby failed "to bypass religion and philosophy's profoundest controversies," as Rawls says they must try to do. Not only does this debate reflect deep philosophical differences, but the alternative solutions offer different terms to different people holding different permissible comprehensive views. And compliance with any proposed alternative will require the use of public force. Surely the attempt to keep the issue off the public agenda, to avoid taking a stand one way or the other, is an evasion, and doomed to fail.

Indeed, Rawls himself comes out in favor of abortion rights. And there is nothing particularly catastrophic or fatal about his failure to discover a perfectly nonpartisan stance on which all reasonable people can agree. The abortion debate, however acrimonious, has not torn American society apart. Nor can it be plausibly described as part of a general "impasse" that must be overcome if we are to deal constructively with our other pressing problems. American society today suffers from many intractable problems, but Rawls's philosophical "impasse" is not one of them, much less the root of all the others.

Contrary to Rawls, the chances for consensus will not necessarily improve when we banish questions of the good and focus single-mindedly on questions of the right. Sometimes garden-variety conflicts are dangerously intensified when claims about justice are raised. This may explain why earlier liberals tended, unlike Rawls, to separate their theories of toleration from their theories of justice. Rival groups may fight more fiercely, and be less prone to compromise, when they fight to avenge a perceived injustice than when they fight for material interests. While it may be improved by a clarification and narrowing of the public agenda, democratic politics will remain a battlefield on which rival conceptions of the right will clash. The theory of justice is not the shortest or the smoothest road to social harmony. •

Unsung Heroes

BY EDWARD LUTTWAK

Crusade: The Untold Story of the Persian Gulf War by Rick Atkinson

(Houghton Mifflin, 559 pp., $24.95)

The well-informed will know that the author of this book is well-informed as soon as they come across the otherwise uncelebrated names Warden and Deptula, as well as the marginally better known name Glosson. In contrast to their anonymity in the Gulf War's notoriously manipulated reportage and often servile commentary, all three are recognized in these pages as leading protagonists of the war that was actually fought, as opposed to the imaginary war that was conjured up by the endless sequence of misleading videos.

One recalls the zillion dramatic carrier takeoffs (Navy aircraft delivered less than 10 percent of the precision weapons used); all those tanks forever churning up sand (see below); the embarrassing excess of warships that filled the Gulf to little purpose (the daily operational review invariably started with Saudi anti-submarine operations, which were all completely successful, since Iraq had no submarines); the photogenic British rep's clipped-toned daily press briefings on RAF Tornado air strikes (never did so few bombs that wreaked so little damage receive so many words of praise); and the many stories somehow contrived out of the Marine division that was kept afloat for several months in the Gulf (one does hope for their sake that all those WWII stories of bromides in the rations were true in their case at least) to keep the world in suspense and distract a few Iraqi formations by threatening an amphibious landing that never was. But by far the greatest and most meretricious of the Gulf War stories was General Norman Schwarzkopf's own offering to an admiring global audience.

I refer, of course, to Schwarzkopf's spirited fantasy of a Cannae in the desert, with himself as Hannibal and the Iraqi army crushed as the Romans were by a mighty convergence of armies. In the event, however, the American armored divisions that were laboriously shipped to Saudi Arabia, and lavishly supplied with mountains of ammunition and oceans of fuel, did not penetrate in depth to cut off the Iraqi forces strung out along the Baghdad-Kuwait axis. Nor did they then block the Iraqi retreat and capture whatever armor they did not destroy—that being the standard desert-warfare "deep" maneuver that gives the attackers all the advantages of fighting on the tactical defense, while forcing the fleeing enemy already in disarray to attack.

Instead, for all his talk of bold maneuver in the style of Hannibal and Rommel, the plan that Schwarzkopf actually approved was timid. It called for a shallow turning movement that could only push the Iraqi forces where they wanted to go anyway, that is, back toward Baghdad. Thus, quite independently of the decision of Colin Powell and George Bush to stop the war unilaterally, the Schwarzkopf plan itself virtually made it impossible to achieve the one aim that could have justified sending hundreds of thousands of Americans, including married-reservist-truck drivers, to camp in the Saudi desert for months on end: the utter disruption of the Iraqi army as an organized force, and the definitive destruction or capture

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of most of its tanks, infantry combat vehicles, troop carriers, self-propelled artillery and supply-truck columns—the hardware that subsequently allowed Saddam Hussein to massacre Shiite and Kurdish insurgents, and to remain in power until this day.

Amazingly enough, in his remarkably mean-spirited memoirs Schwarzkopf blames the fiasco on his major armored commander, Lieutenant General Frederick M. Franks Jr., commander of VII Corps, whom he accuses of advancing much too slowly and much too cautiously. In truth, the rate of advance was irrelevant, because the only difference it made was in the speed at which the Iraqis would be pushed back to safety, the plan itself having provided for their escape. Moreover, everyone in the upper echelons of the United States Army knew that Franks had risen up the greasy pole by being too cautious to make mistakes, and too much of a procrastinator to rush into any unwise decision, or indeed any decision at all. Still, knowing this full well, and amply reminded of it by close subordinates, some wanting the prestigious command of VII Corps for themselves, Schwarzkopf made no attempt to replace Franks before the fighting began, as he was fully entitled to do. Instead he waited until the time came to produce his shoddy $3 million "as told to" memoirs to criticize Franks after the fact.

Meanwhile, back in the orbit of reality, as opposed to televisionary mystification (modern Serb proverb: a picture can obscure a thousand true words), John A. Warden, though a mere USAF colonel invisible in the galaxy of many-starred CNN-stars, turned his minuscule research staff into the veritable planners of the military operations that actually happened, and (unlike those Marine non-landings, the British chit chat, the pointless naval activity and the ineffectual ground war) actually had a decisive impact on the course of events. His "Instant Thunder" plan of classically strategic bombardment in the pure Douhet-Billy Mitchell tradition was accepted in principle within a week of the invasion of Kuwait. (Warden won that role because he had already prepared a conceptually well-developed plan, while the people who should have planned all according to the rule-book, the staff of the U.S. Central Command, were still beginning to organize themselves.) "Instant Thunder" was eventually implemented with relatively modest changes, and unlike the ground war, it accomplished its aims: to destroy whatever nuclear, biological, chemical and other weapons research, development and production facilities that the intelligence organizations of the coalition states had been able to identify, and—above all—simply to shut down the Iraqi state as a functioning entity.

In January 1945, after five years of increasingly heavy bombing, Berlin was devastated, with office buildings and apartment houses in the central districts reduced to burned-out shells, and much destruction even in outlying districts. Yet Josef Goebbels could still broadcast nationwide, and internationally too, by short-wave heard around the world; Hitler, from his bunker, as well as the Wehrmacht's high command in nearby Zossen, could still freely send out orders and receive reports from all fronts by teleprinter and telephone land-lines as well as by radio; and the German army could still move and supply its forces by rail right through the often-bombed but soon repaired Berlin marshalling yards. As for the city's population, many were living in rudely patched-up housing, but electrical power, telephone service, public transport, piped water, sewage disposal and the supply of all basic necessities were still functioning quite well with only brief interruptions. As were many cinemas: *Kolberg*, Europe's first color spectacular, had its well-attended premiere on January 30, 1945.

Less than 48 hours after the air offensive against Iraq began on January 17, 1991, by contrast, Baghdad was still mostly intact, as it was to remain throughout the Gulf War (television reportage showed some of the fifty-odd destroyed buildings, again and again), but Saddam Hussein and his spokesmen could no longer broadcast on television or nationwide radio. All major military headquarters in the city with their land-line and radio communications were wrecked; and the city's population at large was left without electricity, telephone service, public transport, piped water or sewage disposal. With the war hardly begun, Iraq's leader and his military commands were already blind, deaf and mute in their paralyzed capital city, unable to find out what was happening across the country soon enough to react usefully and unable to send out orders in any case, except by very slow or very restricted means.

The immediate effect was to incapacitate Iraq's abundantly equipped air defenses. Each air force base with its fighters, each missile or gun anti-aircraft battery, was left to its own devices, deprived of the early warning necessary to alert them, and of the centralized direction that can make "integrated" air defenses formidable. The effect of the air offensive on the Iraqi army was cumulative rather than immediate. But soon enough it, too, was paralyzed, unable to supply food, water, fuel and ammunition to the vast forces in and around Kuwait, because of the destruction, or "interdiction" in USAF-speak, of rail and road bridges, as well as of ammunition dumps, oil refineries and petroleum tank farms, and the larger depots for supplies of all kinds, including the chemical agents in bombs, shells and warheads for rockets and missiles.

Lieutenant Colonel Dave Deptula, on the other hand, commanded the "black hole" staff at the Riyadh headquarters of the U.S. Central Command that translated, day by day and night by night, Warden's plan into specific orders to specific air units to bomb specific targets. That sounds like little more than an administrative-technical chore, but in reality it called for strategic thinking at each step of the way. Priorities were everything—amid aircraft galore, only a couple of hundred mostly USAF aircraft delivered the laser-guided bombs that were the only really precise "precision weapons" of the war—and priorities could not be defined for each batch of missions without defining the purpose of the war at each stage. On that, by the way, there had been no internal guidance at all; since Colin Powell would not restrict his own sphere of decision by soliciting and then promulgating specific presidential directives, Air Force officers of no particular political expertise had to read Bush's speeches, and even interpret his body language in television appearances, to order his aims. To induce a withdrawal from Kuwait, or to discourage such a withdrawal for as long as possible, so as to extend the opportunity to demolish the Iraqi war machine?

Brigadier General Buster C. Glosson was the modestly senior officer who shouldered the enormous burden of successfully defending the strategic bombardment plan from an imperious Schwarzkopf, and from all the many others who constantly tried to steal away the scarce precision-bombing missions

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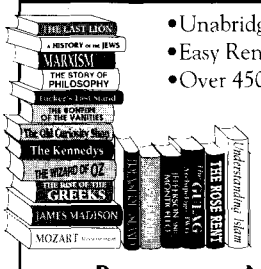

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(fewer than 200 a day) to attack non-strategic targets. It seemed as if everyone in Riyadh and everyone in Washington had his own list of panacea targets. They ranged from the trivial (Iraqi tanks one by one, while the lot of them was being strangled by the interruption of supplies) to the fanciful (most notably the Republican Guards that obsessed Schwarzkopf and Powell, as if mobile forces could ever be worthwhile targets for air strikes, which can only be really effective when they can be pre-planned, which is only possible against fixed targets). And the lists included the downright impossible, such as elusive Scud launchers scattered in vast spaces, as well as the completely useless, such as the mostly inactive installations of the nearly non-existent Iraqi navy. Glosson had to resist foolishness of this ilk around the clock (having not a chance in the case of the Republic Guards), and also to defend the ABCs of interdiction against the idiotic cliché that it had failed in Vietnam. Indeed it had, in that country of rice and water; but in the desert it caused at least one quarter of Iraq's troops to flee their unsupplied units.

Rick Atkinson's book is a good book because it allows the reader to construe the important events of the war from its political framework to the details of its strategic bombardment. But it is a bad book, a willfully bad book, because its author's aim was evidently not lasting reputation but quick cash. Hence it is full of "human interest" stories, of imputed emotions and trivial details that add nothing to our knowledge.

In addition to deliberately depreciating his writing for the sake of appreciating his net worth, Atkinson is limited by a superficial understanding of military strategy and military history, in spite of hugely inflated pretensions on both counts. On airpower, for all his own successful excavation of the buried truth about Warden, Deptula and Glosson, his views are a collection of platitudes. On armored warfare, one comes across all the standard names of commercial paperback military theory (J. F. C. Fuller, Liddel Hart, Buderian, Rommel), but no recognition that armored warfare has evolved greatly because it is no longer fought by long truck columns with small tank spearheads, but rather by all-armored forces, light and heavy, with different limitations and different strengths. The vast consequences of that change were not visible in the Gulf War, but they were certainly evident in the Arab-Israeli war in 1973. This was by far the most important post-1945 armored warfare engagement, but it is undescribed in the kinds of easily available paperbacks that seem to have furnished Rick Atkinson with his knowledge of military history. Anyway, in spite of its limitations, this good-bad book is certainly useful for those who want to reconstruct the realities of a war that was greatly obscured by its allegedly comprehensive coverage.

EDWARD LUTTWAK is director of geoeconomics at the Center for Strategic and International Studies and author of the forthcoming book *The Endangered American Dream* (Simon & Schuster).

Golden Daze

BY MARY-LOU WEISMAN

The Fountain of Age by Betty Friedan

(Simon and Schuster, 638 pp., $25)

Betty Friedan's metaphorical fountain of age spouts research, observation, conjecture, evangelical fervor, revolutionary rhetoric and denial. The result is a pool of optimism in which the mother of the woman's movement examines the unlifted face of age and finds it lovable.

Friedan interviews gerontologists and research scientists; she visits nursing homes and retirement villages. But primarily she sets out to talk with what she calls "vital" old people. Sometimes she uses herself as a subject: reporting on an adventure with Outward Bound, she writes about her refusal to descend a 300-foot cliff and at the same time shows how skilled she is at rescuing victory from the toothless jaws of defeat. "But what a relief at this age, finally, that I don't have to compete to prove myself—that I can live with the fact that I'll never rappel and that failure doesn't really matter one way or the other." She reports on her two weeks at the Pritikin

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Longevity Center where she lost ten pounds and brought down her blood and cholesterol levels, and concludes that "autonomy and control—of one's body, one's life, one's days—is [sic] biologically as well as metaphysically the key to the fountain of age."

All this work, and more, is in the service of Friedan's thesis: that old age, which she defines as beginning at 65, should be seen as a bona fide stage of personal development, potentially as vital and rewarding as any other stage. It must certainly not be seen, she insists, as a process of development in reverse, a return to the childlike state. "Regression is possible," Friedan concedes, "but so is further growth....To make a leap here, I would suggest that the extreme variability found in age...shows that the process of *individuation*, becoming more oneself... shapes our third age uniquely, *unless we succumb in stagnation or denial to the self-fulfilling prophecy of age as decline and despair.*" If you have a lousy old age, you have only yourself to blame.

Friedan favors the experts who suit her mostly polemical purposes. She has little use for mainstream gerontologists. Engaging in some ageism of her own, she refers to them repeatedly as "young turks," chiding them for their preoccupation with aging as disease. She makes short shrift of Freud, whose writing emphasized the developmental years of childhood. And she accuses B. F. Skinner of being an old behaviorist stick-in-the-mud for declining to attend a seminar that she gave at Harvard, called "Growth and Aging," on the grounds that the two were incompatible. "The very term ... outraged some of the senior behavioral scientists," she writes, "especially those advanced in years themselves. B. F. Skinner got especially cross with me." Her psychological soulmates are Jung, Maslow and Erikson, all of whom saw the final years of life as a stage of integration. Friedan launches her own notions from their studies and observations.

In her quest for the fountain of age, Friedan rides off to battle in all directions. First she takes on that favorite American villain, denial; denial, she claims, thrives especially in a culture fixated on youth. Then she must take on wrinkling bodies (they have character); shriveling brains (the brain can compensate); depression (rage at age turned inward); worn-out body parts (medical technology has a lot to offer); and impotence (cuddling can be more intimate than orgasm). If Friedan cannot explode "the dread mystique" of old age, she will at least deflate it with statistics, studies and testimonials.

Her method is evident in the way that she confronts the "myth" of mental decline. First, an attack of surprising statistics: only 10 percent of the aging population will spend time in a nursing home. Alzheimers affects only 5 percent. Then, the exposure of the negative stereotype: the studies that are responsible for promulgating the myth of cognitive decline are flawed in that they used elderly, institutionalized men as subjects. Next, a display of current research: studies show that severe mental decline is usually confined to the five years preceding death, that decline is "neither extensive nor consistent"; and that cognitive abilities remain intact until at least the age of 75. Then the paradigm shift: declines in cognitive function may be the artifacts of tests geared to youth. "In a more complex view of development such so-called declines may, in fact, indicate that the individual is evolving a different and higher level of structural organization." Then the great leap forward: the results of experiments with aging rats, if they apply to humans, will show that the aging human brain can form new dendrite connections, as did the brains of elderly rats if the objects in their cages were changed regularly. And finally the coup de grace: testimonials from clear-headed old people that old age is "the best time of life."

Like all knights errant, Friedan's mission is inspired by a woman. But in this instance the romantic ideal is no maiden; she is post-menopausal. The vitality of some older women first caught Friedan's eye three decades ago, when she was interviewing women of all ages for *The Feminine Mystique*:

> The tone of their skin, their eyes, and their voices seemed somehow more vibrant, more alive than those of the frustrated younger suburban housewives I had been interviewing....And I began to wonder: When women grow beyond the limits of their biological role and find new purposes for their lives, could that larger human dimension change the very biology of the aging process?

Other observations and questions followed. Women live longer than men. Widows live longer than widowers. "Do women become more adventurous with age? After they've lived through or grown beyond the feminine mystique, are women more likely to risk, or relish, new ways to test themselves than men? Could that be one reason women live longer?" Only a spoil-sport reader could resist such rhetorical blandishments with a "maybe."

While enrolled in a post-graduate "Life Study" course at Harvard, Friedan noticed that older men described life as a consistent upward trajectory until mid-life, after which it was downhill all the way, whereas the older women enrolled in the course described their lives in ups, downs, interruptions and plateaus. "Could the very discontinuity and change that has [sic] taken place in women's roles over a lifetime—*their continual practice in retirement and disengagement, shift and reengagement*—account for their greater flexibility and resilience in age?" And further, "Was that sense of age as decline...based on male sexual strength that declines with age?" If the zesty postmenopausal woman seemed to become more like a man in her taste for power, might not middle-aged men benefit from a concomitant "crossover" into the more female nurturing role? And did that explain many middle-aged men divorcing their wives, marrying younger women and having second families to "affirm the nurturing side" of themselves? And so the mother of feminism set off to interview Hugh Hefner on the subject. "It took me a long time to get there," Hefner tells Friedan, "but what gives me the most satisfaction now, strangely enough, is my relationship with my own wife, and my kids. I don't have to prove anything anymore." Denial makes strange bedfellows.

Friedan quotes copiously from her conversations with "vital" elderly people. A disproportionate number of them are friends from Sag Harbor, Los Angeles and New York: the power elite of aging. All attest to the many and varied satisfactions of aging. "The idea you can't learn new things in age is wrong," a columnist tells her. "The desire to learn more, be more, intensifies." A friend in her mid-seventies leaves for a red-wine tasting tour in France even though her neck, which she broke in a fall on the bathroom floor, is ensconced in a foam rubber collar and her doctor told her that another fall would kill her; she is travel-

Hibernation

The colder it gets, the deeper we sleep ...
Last night, Pascal's terror
bristled over us
scarified with points of light.

We spared a last thought
for the orbiting spaceman
abandoned out there
whose country no longer exists

before my lips and teeth
found the soft place,
the mammal's peace,
between your neck and shoulder.

STEPHEN ROMER

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ing with her new husband who believes that red wine is better for his shingles than the medication prescribed by his doctors. Another friend, "the first woman vice-president on network television news," refused to be bumped from TV to radio reporter by her "thirtysomething boss," so she quit. "She had been terrified of such a moment because she had felt her life depended on her handsome salary and corporate perquisites," Friedan writes. "But the next year, becoming her own agent, she developed a whole new specialty of satellite broadcasting...wrote a book, developed a news program...and finally found the time to use her own swimming pool."

Friedan means to show the vital side of aging, but too often what she exposes is the face of wealth, education, social standing, talent and genetic good luck. To be sure, she does not claim that her exemplars of old age are typical. But she does insist that this is what old age could, and should, be. It is a highly dubious claim, which brings to mind the pronouncement made by Gloria Steinem on the celebration of her 50th birthday at the Waldorf Astoria. "This is what 50 looks like," she said, while up to her cleavage in a bubble bath.

Friedan toasts the fountain of age with a glass half full and a line from Browning: "Grow old along with me!/ the best is yet to be...." There is nothing wrong with examining aging through an optimistic lens. Why not look on the bright side? Why dwell on the "sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything" side of life? Given a choice of attitudes with which to live one's final years, optimism is clearly the way to go. Make the best of it. You're only as old as you feel, right?

In making the best case for aging, however, Friedan makes too good a case. She overlooks or diminishes too much of reality. To ask the reader to look forward to trading orgasm for cuddling strains credulity. To suggest that older men marry younger women to express their nurturing side seems like feminism run amok. Friedan never acknowledges that people bring the psychological accumulation of a lifetime with them into old age. The insecure, middle-aged person who rarely initiates any activity and likes to stay home and watch TV is not likely to begin a second career or otherwise transform himself into a "vital" old person, no matter how many pom poms of encouragement Friedan waves at him. Nor does Friedan show much respect for death, the stage to end all stages. (Even Erikson characterized his eighth and final stage as a critical struggle between "integrity and despair.")

Friedan is at her best and most useful in the chapters about such practical considerations of aging as alternative housing. But then she devotes a chapter to proving the obvious fact that this culture is fixated on youth, and another chapter to setting forth the already well-publicized pros and cons of estrogen replacement therapy, possibly so that she can pose yet another leading question: "If we kept on those drugs which 'prevent' or 'postpone' menopause indefinitely, even if we didn't invite uterine or breast cancer, liver disease or stroke, would we forfeit the lucid glow, or what Margaret Mead called the post-menopausal zest, of finally being fully who we are ourselves?" Friedan may not be able to rappel off cliffs, but she has no problem jumping to conclusions. One is grateful, after 638 pages, that Friedan did not discover the fountain of eternal age.

Friedan's claim that she underwent a kind of epiphany halfway through her interviews with vital women sounds disingenuous. "A door opened and life suddenly took on new meaning. I discovered that I was like the women I was studying! The kind of vital later years they are enjoying I too can look forward to." But this is no conversion. It rounds out the odyssey of the woman whose personal crises have fueled public revolutions. Friedan wants to make at least one more before she dies. She is her own best example. Look at me, says the revolutionary grandma who flies all over the country giving lectures and writing books. *This* is age.

MARY-LOU WEISMAN is the author of *Intensive Care: A Family Love Story* (Random House).

Houses of the Rich and Famous

BY RICHARD L. BUSHMAN

New York, New York: How the Apartment House Transformed the Life of the City (1863-1930) by Elizabeth Hawes

(Knopf, 285 pp., $30)

The title of Elizabeth Hawes's fascinating book recalls Leonard Bernstein's *On the Town*, whose sailors on shore-leave sing "New York, New York, it's a helluva town ... the people ride in a hole in the ground." They were probably equally amazed to see that New Yorkers lived in boxes stacked on top of one another, instead of in houses like other Americans. Long before World War II, huge apartment houses, many of them encrusted with fabulous confections and furnished with fountains, swimming pools and marble lobbies, had risen from the sidewalks. Visitors from middle America were bound to wonder about life in those vast conglomerates. How could the residents endure such an exotic and bizarre existence?

Hawes tells us that at the end of the Civil War, New Yorkers would have asked the same question. "All respectable New Yorkers" lived in private houses in 1869, she reports. By 1929, 98 percent of Manhattan was housed in apartments. Sixty years had brought a revolution in residential life.

There were obvious economic reasons for apartment living in Manhattan's confined space, and the book disposes of these in a few sentences. "Vertical living was an inevitability in a city with a growing population and a limited landmass." Hawes's book is more concerned with the sentimental values that had to be overcome. "The campaign to make the apartment house a respectable place of dwelling," she says, "was a struggle against the stubborn grip of traditional values." The first settlers came to America with a long commitment to individual residences, and New Yorkers gave up private houses "after centuries of cherishing them." To lure people out of their houses, apartment-house builders introduced the extravagant architectural features that still grace the facades of the Dakota (1884), the Ansonia (1902) and the Dorilton (1903). Builders added one service after another to make apartment living as convenient and graceful as possible. Gradually the builders wore down the resistance of the private house people, and by World War I the city was converted. From the war to 1930, during a flurry of furious building activity, the last holdouts moved from their houses into apartments.

This story seems straightforward enough, but it leaves out a lot. Hawes's subtitle—"How the Apartment House Transformed the Life of the City"—leads a reader to think that the book is about the conversion of New York as a whole to

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apartment living. The limits become clear when the first apartment house is identified as the Stuyvesant, erected at 142 East 18th Street by Richard Morris Hunt in 1869. Left out are all of the tenement-dwellers who from the 1830s on were living in three-story houses and barrack-style buildings intended for multi-family occupancy. By 1860 two-thirds of New York households lived in multi-family dwellings. (For their story there is Elizabeth Blackmar's excellent *Manhattan for Rent, 1785-1850*, which appeared in 1989.) The opening statement about "all respectable New Yorkers" forewarns us that the laboring classes are to be excluded.

As Hawes's book goes on, even more of the city drops out of the picture. The apartments that merit attention are the grandest structures—the Navarro, the Vancorlear, the Villard houses, the Osborne, the Belnord—luxury apartments when luxury meant something. Between 1902 and 1910, more than 4,000 apartment houses were erected in Manhattan. Of these thousands, hundreds were designed for the upper- and upper-middle classes. Only a score or so of the most elegant, however, are the subject of this book; it covers the most extravagant buildings, the landmarks of opulence and grandeur, and attends to the people who could afford the rents: Theodore Steinway, the piano merchant, and Gustav Schirmer, the music publisher, in the Dakota; Florenz Ziegfeld, Arturo Toscanini and Igor Stravinsky in the Ansonia; and assorted professional people and artists in the other grand buildings. But the thousands of middle-class apartments are dismissed as "tedious, self-conscious six- or eight-story structures" that the architectural critic Montgomery Schuyler called "a panorama of platitude." (We can learn about these plain structures in Elizabeth Cromley's *Alone Together: A History of New York's Early Apartments*, published in 1990.)

Even these well-heeled, cultured apartment-dwellers are not at the center of the book's story. They rented the huge apartments—up to eighteen rooms with three baths—that went up on the artistic and entrepreneurial Upper West Side at the end of the nineteenth century. But their conversion to apartment living does not figure into the drama of the book. Hawes says nothing about the former residences of these worldly cosmopolitan figures, for whom a transition from a traditional private house was hardly an issue. Nor is the book concerned about anyone else who moved into the West Side palaces. The construction of luxury apartments on that side of town was only a prelude to the truly crucial conversion to apartment living.

The final bastion of the old values was not the middle class and not the upper-middle class, who were won over in large numbers by the splendor of the luxury apartments. The final hold-outs, and the people whom Hawes cares about most, were the fabulously wealthy millionaires whose mansions lined Fifth Avenue from the William K. Vanderbilt house at 52nd Street to the Carnegie mansion on 91st Street. She intimates that the point of the unstinting opulence of the luxury apartments, their fountains and courtyards, their Turkish baths and tearooms, their walnut paneling and marble fireplaces, was to win over these few. The triumph of the apartment house was its "eventual success with the upper classes, who had the greatest investment in houses and the least inclination to be pragmatic."

The argument blurs a little at this point. Hawes begins with a reference to the centuries-old tradition of the private house and its "sentimental value." But the mansions along Fifth Avenue were not monuments to the old ways. They were fashion statements. The Fifth Avenue houses were New York versions of the mansions that lined the parks on the outskirts of English cities, where the English elite had erected town residences with country features since the early years of the nineteenth century. The Parisian upper classes had long preferred apartments, and the label "French flats" for early New York apartments was an effort to evoke the Parisian style. The problem for New York apartment builders was not to overcome traditional values, it was to persuade the elite to follow French rather than English fashions. It is amusing to think of the elite holding onto their huge mansions out of an old-fashioned love of home.

Like the elegant park developments on the outskirts of English cities, Fifth Avenue along Central Park was devoted to grand houses, most of them built in a short span between 1890 and 1910. For a time the owners attempted to keep apartment houses off the Avenue. Vanderbilt and the Astors bought up land near their mansions to prevent the wrong kind of development. When an apartment house was proposed for Fifth between 64th and 65th, the neighbors chipped in to take the property off the market. While New Yorkers of every other stripe were moving into apartments, the millionaires remained cloistered in their private houses.

The climax of the book's drama is reached when this wall of upper-class opposition is finally breached. McKim, Mead and White, the city's leading architectural firm for more than a quarter century, and designer of many of New York's greatest buildings, was the first to invade Millionaires' Row. In 1910 it built 998 Fifth Avenue at 81st Street, across from the steps of the Metropolitan Museum. The firm did not emulate the ornate decoration of the Ansonia or the Dorilton across the Park, but 998 was elegant in its own way. The building was "a full-scale neo-Italian Renaissance palazzo of exquisite refinement."

The owners of the land, two young lawyers named Fleischmann and Lee, who had purchased it from August Belmont II, gave the architects "carte blanche to build an apartment house fine enough to lure the wealthy out of their houses," which was all along the aim of the luxury apartments. The decor was restrained but elegant. The facade was limestone and marble, the inner courtyard rusticated stone; the lobby, floors and door frames were marble; the elevators were paneled in French walnut. The building contained three apartments for every two stories, adding up to six duplexes and eleven seventeen-room simplexes. The idea behind many of the luxury apartments had been to encase mansion-sized apartments within the apartment shell. The apartments at 998 Fifth Avenue were as large as the neighboring town houses.

The architectural critics liked 998, but good reviews were not enough. The big question was who would rent the space. In the book's retelling of the story, the pivotal figure was Elihu Root, then senator from New York, who had built a house at 72nd Street and Park Avenue a few years before.

> Now, according to real estate stories, Senator Root walked through 998 with the young broker Douglas Ellman, who pointed out the thick walls and fine pantry and real fireplaces, and then offered him a cut rate to give up his brick townhouse on Park and sign a lease. Root agreed. A Vanderbilt, a Guggenheim and a Morton followed, and the tide turned without further ado to apartment living.

As told in *New York, New York*, that was it, the turning point, the watershed. Hawes says that some few people crop up in every generation to live out its vital stories. "Their comings and goings substantiate the movements of a whole society." By daring to move into Fifth Avenue apartments, Root and another 998 renter, Levi P. Morton, the former governor of New York, acquired that symbolic significance. Morton's residences had been at the cutting edge of fashion: he moved up Fifth Avenue at just the right times, from 17th Street to 42nd Street and then to 55th. In 1910 he moved to 998 Fifth Avenue and built a thirteen-story commercial structure on the site of his former townhouse, signaling that mansions were out and apartments were in.

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After the success of 998, the opposition to apartment living collapsed, not suddenly but steadily. The Fifth Avenue mansions, most of them less than twenty-five years old, began to go down and apartments went up. J. E. R. Carpenter, the best of the apartment-house architects, designed more than fifteen Renaissance-style apartment buildings for Fifth Avenue. Meanwhile Park Avenue north of 42nd Street, which had been a neighborhood of small businesses and second-grade apartments, was coming into its own. The railroad was converted to electricity and put under the street. With the change to apartment living, apartment houses and hotels rather than mansions lined Park. By 1921 Park was hailed as the new Fifth Avenue.

The success of Park marked the completion of the long-sought conversion of the rich, and the final triumph of apartment-house living. For most New Yorkers, of course, the triumph of the apartment house was already taken for granted, though you wouldn't guess it from this book. The middle class had long before capitulated to the costs of private houses in the city. The rising value of lots made it difficult to profit from single-family dwellings. Speculators bought up houses, divided them into small apartments, and waited to sell out to commercial interests who put in offices or stores. The only kind of housing that could survive in this high-pressure market was the apartment. Every large city experienced the change, but New York built apartments like no other American city.

The middle class was compelled to move into apartments despite the objections to apartment living voiced in popular periodicals. One of the critical elements of middle-class life in the nineteenth century was a regard for genteel refinement. In the eighteenth century, only the American gentry could afford to refine itself in emulation of elevated standards of deportment, dress and housing practiced by the European aristocracy. Part of the democratization of American life after the Revolution was the adaptation of gentility for a much broader segment of the population. To live in rough and cramped quarters like the city's immigrant and laboring population would have compromised the fundamental social identity of the swelling middle classes. As soaring costs drove them from private houses, they resorted to respectable boarding houses and then to hotels. In the closing decades of the nineteenth century, they flocked to apartments as affordable housing with more privacy than a boarding house and, most important, more refinement.

The gentility of the rich was never in jeopardy, but ultimately they, too, bowed before the economic pressures. The rising value of the land underneath a single mansion made the construction of an apartment house, which could contain two dozen or more spectacular residences, nearly irresistible. Root and Morton could not have have turned the tide without support from these powerful economic forces.

A history of the New York apartment house might have told many stories other than this one. Besides the poor in their tenements, or the middle classes in their inconsequential apartments, many others were affected by apartment houses—even by the fabulous luxury apartments that housed the wealthy upper middle class. Architects and entrepreneurs profited, and there were thousands of jobs for workers who piled up the stones, installed the electrical wiring and cut the marble for floors. Contractors benefited from opportunities like the biggest plumbing job in history (at the Ansonia). And after the buildings were constructed, an army of cooks, maids, guards, clerks, attendants, janitors and elevator operators made the apartments function. On the adjoining blocks, florists, barbers, provisioners, tailors and dressmakers suddenly enjoyed the proximity of a large and wealthy clientele. The luxury apartments transformed whole neighborhoods and many lives.

Near the end of the book, Hawes refers to Sidney Kingsley's *Dead End*, a social protest drama that played on Broadway in 1936 and became a movie. The play is set along the East River where palatial apartments have been constructed in the middle of a slum made up of old warehouses, breweries, slaughter houses, gas tanks and coal chutes. In the shadow of the apartment, street kids from the tenements swim in the river and pester the doorman. Hawes writes that "ground level was their reality, from which they gazed up in wonder and envy at a beautiful young woman on her terrace in the sky." The image caught the mood of the Depression—awe at the unattainable power of the rich, resentment of their effortless freedom and beauty, the ineffectuality of those at ground level. But the play should have liberated us from the fixations of the '30s. The rich do not lived privileged lives on behalf of us all. Their story is not New York's story. We have reason to feel uncomfortable with a book that looks up with so much wonder.

RICHARD L. BUSHMAN, who teaches history at Columbia University, is the author of *The Refinement of America: Persons, Houses, Cities* (Knopf).

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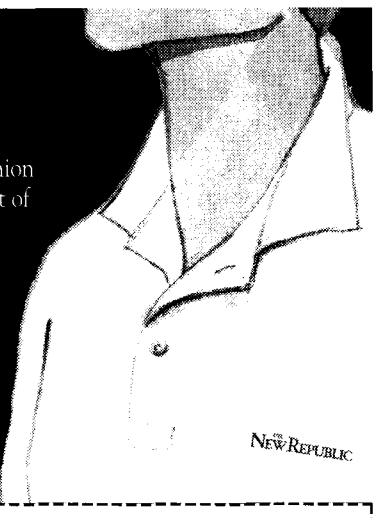

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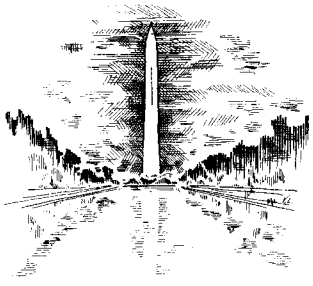
WASHINGTON DIARIST

Details, details

SOMETHING ABOUT THE WHITE House's story of General Shalikashvili's childhood odyssey left me suspicious. Not that there was any way of knowing Shali's father would turn out to have served in the Waffen S.S. But the drama of the Georgian patriot, caught between Hitlerism and Stalinism, had a surface implausibility. It smacked of exculpatory mythology, the sort of thing kids are told about their grandparents to gloss over darker realities. And I'm afraid the widely repeated details of the general's immigrant saga inspire similar doubts. Does anybody really believe, for instance, that Shali learned English by watching John Wayne movies in Peoria? The fable radiates idealization; it's half Abe Lincoln, half Horatio Alger. Politicians are always fond of lore that demonstrates character at an early age, which is why we heard about the pre-adolescent Ross Perot breaking wild horses and about Bill Clinton facing down his drunken stepfather. If I had to guess, I'd say these are less conscious dishonesties than the type of tale told so often that the teller can no longer distinguish it from the truth it improves upon. My rule is to treat all ancient yarns as allegories until presented with evidence and witnesses. For the press, a disclaimer would help. Something like: *The Times* does not know if these details are literally true.

SOME DETAILS ARE IGNORED BEcause they confound popular myths. For example, most people assume Ronald Reagan took lots of naps in the White House. They also believe Bill Clinton does not take a lot of naps. In fact, Reagan didn't take naps—he just joked about taking them. Clinton kips once or twice a week, according to George Stephanopoulos (who hastens to add that these are not full-dress affairs with pajamas and teddy bear—more like 15-minute catnaps). Or take another example. Clinton, as TNR reported a few weeks ago, was briefed by video on the top candidates for chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. This detail didn't get picked up because no one thinks Clinton, whatever his other faults, is a dotard. When it was revealed that aides used filmstrips to brief Reagan, he was practically laughed out of office. The statistic I'm still waiting for is that Clinton spends more time watching movies in the White House than Reagan did.

I WAS THOROUGHLY DEPRESSED BY the warm reception the Black Congressional Caucus accorded Louis Farrakhan at its annual legislative weekend. He was welcomed as one of five speakers at the main event. And he was praised by Ben Chavis, who said it was a mistake not to have invited him to the 30th anniversary of the March on Washington, and by Jesse Jackson, who said his differences with the minister are history. Worst of all, Kweisi Mfume, the group's chairman, announced that the caucus was entering into a "covenant" with the Nation of Islam. But then, most of the reporting was so boosterish that it was impossible to be sure what really happened. In the *Post*, Lynn Duke used no stronger term than "often controversial" to characterize the Nation of Islam. "Farrakhan has been controversial among whites because of his advocacy of racial separatism," she wrote, "and among Jews because he has made statements many deemed anti-Semitic. He has far broader acceptance among blacks. Many blacks admire the bow-tied, neat and disciplined members of the Nation of Islam, who preach black self-sufficiency and practice it." Whoa. It's not just Jews who believe that it was anti-Semitic for Farrakhan to say, "Jews know their wickedness, not just Zionism, which is an outgrowth of Jewish transgression," or to call Judaism a "dirty religion," or to say he was happy to be compared to Hitler because "Hitler was a very great man." Many non-Jewish whites, and yes, many blacks, take a dim view of these statements, too. Many whites, blacks and Jews object to Farrakhan because he is a demagogue who preaches racial hatred and violence. Many blacks do not admire him because they regard him as the leader of a totalitarian cult, which produces brainwashed, bow-tied zombies. I imagine Lynn Duke would write somewhat differently about a meeting at which the Christian Coalition welcomed David Duke. One other point. In the past, black leaders have complained about being asked to condemn Farrakhan as a kind of litmus test. They have no connection to him, they say. Why should they have to denounce him? Thanks to Kweisi Mfume, all black members of Congress (with the exception of Gary Franks, a Republican, who recently quit the caucus) now have a connection to Farrakhan. Those who are unhappy about it—as I expect many of them are—should ignore the bogus demands for "unity" and make their voices heard.



MY ESTEEM FOR BRUCE BABBITT continues to grow. The newest brief in his favor is Alexander Cockburn's running campaign against him in *The Nation*. Cockburn has proclaimed it "Munich in the Redwoods" because Babbitt, whom he calls a "slimy fellow" and "a strikebreaker from Arizona," has settled the timber issue in the Pacific Northwest. Somehow, it seems, the nefarious Clintonite got all the major enviro groups to agree to a compromise, even though it means logging will continue to occur. Actually, I didn't know Cockburn was interested in trees. I guess with the USSR fallen and the PLO gone mainstream, he's facing the same problem as his right-wing counterparts. For them there aren't any enemies left. For Cockburn there aren't any friends.

ELSEWHERE IN Washington Ben Nighthorse Campbell, the Motorcycle-riding, jewelry-designing, pony-tail-wearing Senator from Colorado, is threatening to prevent the Washington Redskins from building a new stadium unless they change their name to something less offensive to Native Americans. My initial reaction was, haven't you got something better to do with your time? Offensive team names can't rank very high among the ills affecting Indians. But on further consideration, it's not hard to see why Campbell is offended. The problem is that all the good animal names—animals being the only group without an anti-defamation lobby—are taken. Of course, the 'Skins could take the disused name of the Washington Senators, but nobody wants to be associated with such unloved, furless creatures. Fred Barnes tells me there used to be a professional soccer team here called the Diplomats, but that they unfortunately became known as the Dips. So nix on that. The Washington Monuments sounds like its players might be slow off their marks. Same goes for the Washington Posts. And The Washington Insiders sounds too much like the McLaughlin Group in tights—an image I don't think many of us care to contemplate. Perhaps the Beltway Bandits, but skybox sales to defense contractors might suffer. The best idea, I think, is the Redskis. You only have to remove one letter, which should save money on logo redesign. It has an excellent, Wayne's World ring. The only potential objection I can think of is from the Polish Embassy.

JACOB WEISBERG

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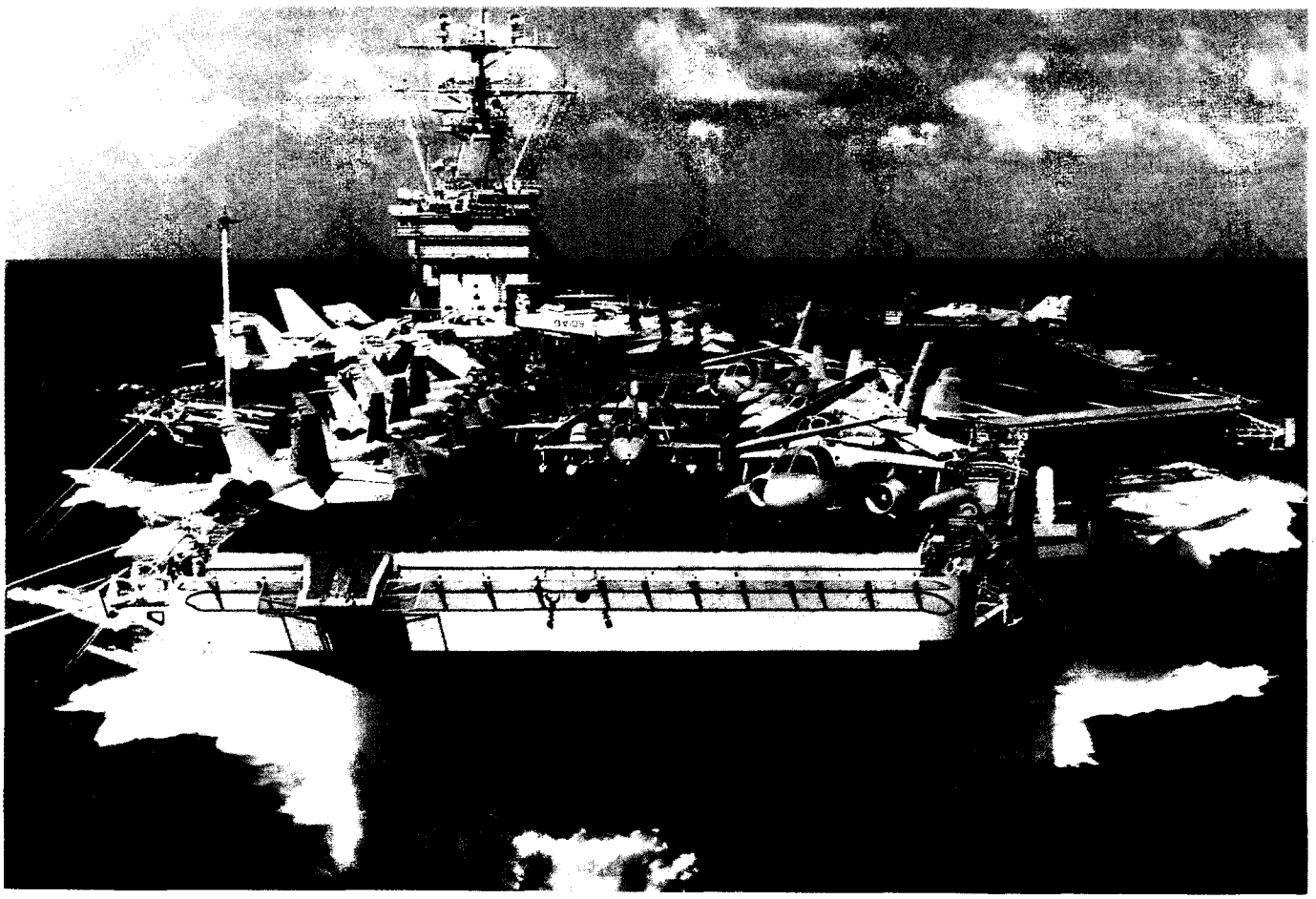

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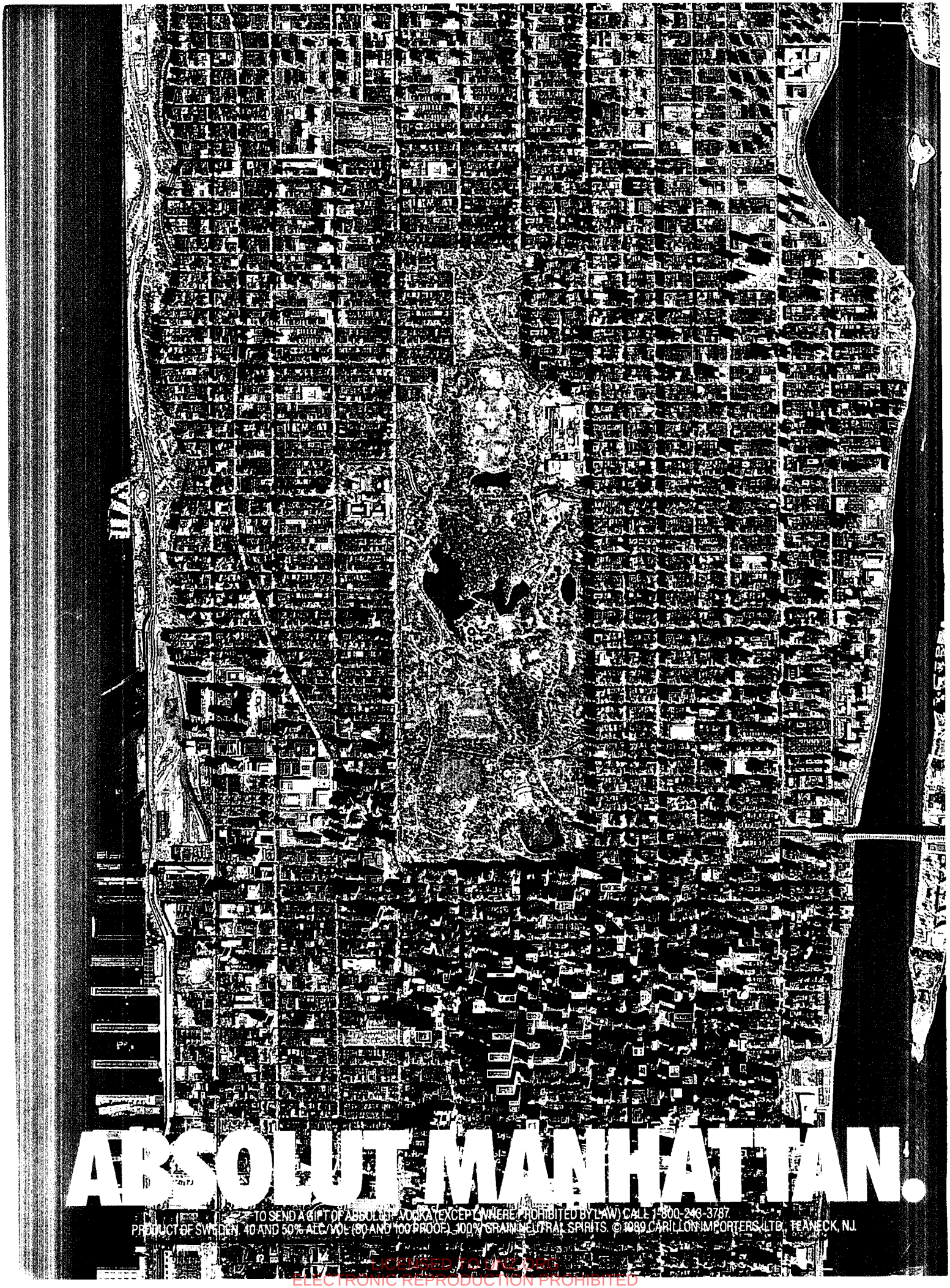
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